Heritage Conservation and Ideologies

[a reader]

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Critical reflections

Introduction

Currently, the role of heritage places in constructing identities is frequently discussed in relation to the intentional destruction of cultural heritage, such as by the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria, by Al-Quaeda in Mali, and by the Taliban in Afghanistan. In these prominent cases, which have been widely reported on by international media, the underlying motives are likely to be identified as fundamentalist religious ideologies. However, such approprtion of cultural heritage was not invented by contemporary Islamic fundamentalists: destruction, reconstruction, and other types of transformation and interpretation of built heritage for political purposes have existed throughout the history of humankind. They are visible and tangible acts of the assessment and selection of physical remains of the past that raise the question: should they or should they not be preserved for future generations?

In the summer semester of 2017, students from the master programs in World Heritage Studies (WHS), Heritage Conservation and Site Management (HCSM), and Architecture at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg participated in a study project on “Heritage Conservation and Ideologies” offered by the Department of Architectural Conservation. The study project addressed architectural conservation as a discipline that plays a vital role in the construction of identities, and therefore, is extremely prone to being appropriated for political purposes. In this context, the international

students from diverse academic backgrounds discussed heritage politics in different cultural regions, nation-states, and political systems in order to investigate cases of ideologised heritage conservation and their relationship to religion, history, and politics.

The study project resulted in 14 research papers, which are included in this reader. While the overarching theme of the papers is that of the processes of ideologised memorialisation, the papers can be roughly grouped into three sub-themes that provide the structure for this reader: destruction/reconstruction, transformation, and interpretation.

The perspectives offered in this reader show that whether one deals with the destruction, reconstruction, transformation, or interpretation of cultural heritage, the underlying political-ideological motivations are often more complex than they seem at first sight.

Destruction / Reconstruction

Elisabeth Korinth's paper, titled *The Mosul Case: The ailing pillars of the artificially constructed national identity of Iraq*, investigates the relationship between Mesopotamian heritage and its destruction by the IS through the lens of both its political and religious ideologies, as well as through its various historical entanglements. With reference to her case studies of the Mosul Museum and the archaeological site of Nineveh in Iraq, the author shows that to understand the destruction of cultural properties in this context, one must look further than just at religious motivations. Regarding the rebuilding and recovery of concerned sites that disregard their historical, geographical, political, and social entanglements, she warns that such efforts will not resonate with the respective societies and may eventually cause history to repeat itself.

In her paper *The Buddha Statues of Bamiyan: Analysis of the conservation process and its political forces*, Isabelle Mühlstädt evaluates the ideologies that triggered the different approaches to the conservation and safeguarding of the remains of this site. In 2001, the Buddha statues in Bamiyan Valley were destroyed by the Taliban in an act of performative iconoclasm. The author analyses the intensive and long-lasting debates on the site's recovery and discusses the decision-making process of the stakeholders involved, including UNESCO, the Afghan Government, and on-site conservators. Her critical analysis shows that the destruction and the reconstruction of a monument are equally symbolic acts. The paper identifies critical issues embodied in this famous case study and turns them into reflections on more viable approaches for cultural heritage conservation in post-conflict situations.

The paper *The Destruction of Reza Sha's Mausoleum: An effort to distort history* critically reflects on the destruction of tombs in Iran, which the author shows is a phenomenon that has become a cultural tradition in Iran. With his analysis of the destruction of Reza Sha's Mausoleum, Arman Ebrahimi depicts the conflict between Iranian identity and Islamic

identity that has been prevalent in Iran since Muslim Arabs conquered the territory in the seventh century AD. Reza Sha's Mausoleum once symbolised modern ideals and secularism, and a cultural identity based on pre-Islamic Iranianism, and it was therefore erased by the regime of the Islamic Revolution (1979), which was promoting a type of nationalism that is based on Shia religious ideology. Referring to David Lowenthal's ideas on 'improving the past', the cases of destruction of mausoleums and gravesites in Iran illustrates how memorialisation is shaped by those in power, and how their selection is based on political interests that follow particular ideologies.

By describing the complex case of the mosque *Babri Masjid,* formerly known as Ramjanmabhoomi—an important Hindu site believed to be the birthplace of Lord Rama—in Ayodhya (India), Arpitha Shreedhara shows the impact that religiously backed-up nation-building strategies can have on religious heritage sites and their respective communities. The case study illustrates the issue of Hindu-Muslim rivalry in India, which is extremely complex and has turned the religious site of Babri Masjid into a difficult heritage site due to the many casualties associated with this dispute. Acknowledging the complexity of the situation, the author proposes that the only solution to the on-going conflict would be to change the site's function entirely into something secular that all members of the different religious communities could benefit from.

Transformation

In her paper *The Palace of the Republic: When destruction creates myths*, Eva Maas discusses the emotional debates surrounding the destruction and reconstruction of this symbolic site in the core of Berlin. She reflects on its diverging and contrasting meanings and discusses how attempts to deal with this entanglement of different meanings turned into an impossible task that resulted in the deconstruction and annihilation of the site. However, she argues that the tale of the Palace has become a myth that might be more powerful in terms of remembrance than the original site would have been. In this regard, she reflects on the difficulty of representing this architectural victim within the realm of the future Humboldtforum.

The paper *An Alternative to "Grand Narratives": Artistic practice as preservation process* written by Katrine Jensen focuses on the conservation of ideology-laden architecture or politically charged buildings, and discusses how ephemeral forms of interpretation can trigger new dialogues. She discusses the performative opportunities of art production as a tool for the preservation, promotion, and interpretation of this cultural heritage. Based on the case study of 'Bungalow Germania', the German contribution to the 14th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale 2014, Jensen argues that artistic production and experimental preservation could be an alternative voice to the authorised heritage discourse and conventional preservation practices, particularly when dealing with political heritage.

In her paper *From Church to Mosque to Museum: The influence of religious ideologies on Hagia Sophia*, Sara Akhlaq reviews how this iconic monument has been appropriated by ruling regimes throughout history to further their political and religious ideals as reflected in conservation interventions. The topic is of contemporary significance, as Tayyip Erdogan, currently prime minister of Turkey, seems to want to follow in the footsteps of historical rulers by re-appropriating this monument and turning it back into a mosque. Akhlaq engages in a debate about the contradictions of the Hagia Sophia and its preservation as a visual testimony of the secular ideologies (Christian and Muslim) that led to the site's conversion into a museum. She proposes that in these contexts, World Heritage could be a primary player in peacebuilding. Therefore, cultural diversity could be the tool to turn this conflict into a dialogical resource by using the heritage site to stimulate a peaceful discourse.

With her contribution, *The Corner House Revisited: The future perspectives of uncomfortable heritage,* Mare Heimrāte brings together the viewpoints of various stakeholders regarding the approaches to the conservation and future uses of a rather contested heritage building in Riga. The building symbolises the social repression that occurred during the Soviet occupation of Latvia. Heimrāte discusses the ideologies that underlie the national quest for the preservation and remembrance of the site. Her argument explores the role of the local community in choosing and interpreting their own heritage. Thus, in bringing up the key aspects of the Faro Convention, the author aims to develop possible scenarios for the future use of the site.

Interpretation

The paper *Gandhi in Ghana: Saint or racist?* provides an astute analysis of the debate surrounding the recent erection of a statue of Gandhi on the campus of the University of Ghana in a prominent location in a newly established garden for communal use. For his analysis, Jonathan Doe applies Ashworth's and Tunbridge's dissonance framework in the context of a society moulded by Pan-Africanism. Though Gandhi's non-violence philosophy had once inspired Ghanaian nationalists in their struggle for independence, the conflict surrounding the statue shows that India's commitments in Ghana are now perceived as a sub-imperialism that intends to establish similar dependencies of African countries as during colonial times. The case discussed makes clear that the meaning of a person and their symbolic representation may change according to its context and underlying ideologies.

In his paper *Analysis of a Difficult Heritage from an Ideology of Violence: The Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg*, Juan Carlos Barrientos investigates a site engraved with the political ideology of the National Socialist regime in Germany. He focuses on the aesthetic details of the site's architecture as manifestations of an ideological language and vividly engages with the challenges and difficulties of preserving and interpreting this

difficult heritage by drawing on personal experiences from visiting the site. In his analysis, Barrientos clearly shows how conserving this site is a battle between remembering and forgetting an uncomfortable past.

Estibaliz Sienra Iracheta investigates the heritage distresses and the future prospects of an uncomfortable heritage monument in Spain. In her paper, *The Valley of the Fallen: Conflicts with ideology, collective memory and the conservation of heritage*, she raises a debate on important issues that are central to the national discomfort regarding the conservation and interpretation of cultural heritage associated with the political ideologies of Franco's totalitarian dictatorship in Spain. Recalling concepts such as collective memory and uncomfortable heritage, the argument is built upon the controversies and the possibilities considered for the future of this heritage site. Sienra calls for a complete process of objective resignification in order to allow a transformation of the site's meaning and use. Thus, in an educational shift, both victims could be memorialised and the new visitors could read and reflect on the relations of the landmark with the history of Spain.

In her contribution, *The Soviet War Memorial, Treptower Park, Berlin: How the ideology and propaganda of a memorial helped shape public memory of East Germans during the German Democratic Republic*, Marina Freckmann discusses the impact of political ideology in memorialisation processes and heritage preservation in both the GDR and in today's reunified Germany. She focuses on the Soviet War Memorial as a transformative tool for constructing collective memory in Germany. She further argues that the memorial's current preservation and presentation to the public shows the power of monuments to adapt their meaning and message to the socio-political environment in which they perform.

Paola Fontanella Pisa's paper on *The Social, Cultural and Political Implications of Hiroshima Peace Memorial's Interpretations* investigates the role of this World Heritage Site in the process of shaping Japan's national identity and the effects of its interpretation in both national and international realms. Fontanella brings up stresses on the cultural production associated with the site by contrasting its interpretation as a product of war resulting from a nuclear disaster with its cultural significance as a symbol of worldwide peace. The paper brings up important issues on dealing with the conservation of this uncomfortable heritage. In this case, neither preservation nor destruction alone could carry the message of its cultural significance. Instead, adding a contemporary layer to the site allowed for its urban and ideological understanding through a new scheme of interpretation, thus carrying the message of conservation as a tool to raise awareness about reconciliation and peacebuilding.

In his paper *DI QUI (NON) SI PASSA: Safeguarding and promoting Great War Heritage as remembrance of the conflicts XIXth century ideologies brought to Europe*, Tobias Pagani analyses the Denti del Pasubio as a memorial landscape reflecting the ideologies

of nationalism that lead to the Great War at the beginning of the twentieth century and clarifies the role of such sites in contemporary Europe, with reference to EU-level programmes such as the Euroregions and the European Heritage Label. Through his analysis, Pagani reveals the stark contrast between the nationalistic use of heritage and invented traditions throughout nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe that were aimed at fostering national pride and a sense of superiority, and the idea of shared European heritage as promoted by various European initiatives today with a view to fostering peace and mutual understanding.

Destruction/ Reconstruction

(Makinano 2015 / PD)

Elisabeth Korinth

The Mosul Case

The ailing pillars of the artificially constructed national identity of Iraq

Introduction

"What's next for the city in ruins?" (Dewan & Lister, 2017). This was Angela Dewan's and Tim Lister's opening question in their article about the liberation of Mosul in July 2017 after it had been under siege for four years. Throughout this time, the war for Mosul had made the headlines numerous times. Promulgated online through propaganda videos, the destruction of the Mosul Museum and the archaeological sites of Nineveh became one of the symbols of the ideological warfare of the Islamic State. Since then, different reflections on the possible reasons behind the destruction have been published by various scholars, mostly drawing attention to the act of iconoclasm as well as to illegal trafficking of cultural objects as part of an economic strategy of the Islamic State. In addition to that, UNESCO has emphasised the destruction of heritage as part of a systematic ethnic cleansing by eradicating cultural traces of minorities. Although these factors are an important part of the ideology of the Islamic State as well as its propaganda and financing strategies, the Mosul case proves that these rather simplistic interpretations are inadequate. Only a few scholars went beyond these obvious motivations of the Islamic State in order to provide a different reading that sheds light on underlying historical entanglements. Among them, Chiara De Cesari proposed a juxtaposition of the destructive gesture of the Islamic State with the symbolic meaning of Mesopotamian heritage throughout time, and in particular its role in the building of an Iraqi national identity in the twentieth century, in order to contextualise the act of destruction in a more complex political genealogy

Figure 1. *Archaeological site of Nineveh (Makinano 2008 /PD).*

(De Cesari, 2015, p.22). Building on her theory, this article aims to research the symbolism of Mesopotamian heritage throughout the history of the Iraqi state and its role in the process of nation-building in the twentieth century in order to gain deeper understanding of the current, publicly-presented destruction by the Islamic State as a symbolic act. It will draw conclusions for considerations about future conservation programs.

As a theoretical framework, I shall rely on the theory of *Ideology as a Cultural System* developed by Clifford Geertz (1973), an approach to the research of ideology that includes the construction of symbols for the purpose of structuring, understanding, and solving a specific problem on an individual, local, or global level. In his opinion, ideology is concerned with the definition and solution of a problem. It seeks to respond to a felt anxiety and offers a possible way out. Geertz sees the construction of an image of the environment, its objects, events, and people as the beginning of a process in which these provided images are then replaced by symbols in order to be able to pattern human life into cultural categories to perceive and understand the complexity of human life and society. Institutionalised as cultural programs, ideology seeks to establish stability. Based on his theory, I argue that the destruction of Mesopotamian heritage in the case of the Mosul Museum and the archaeological site of Nineveh (Fig.1) has to be seen and understood not only in the context of the religious ideology of the Islamic State, but also in the context of the roots of its rise, the history of the objects themselves within their geographical location, as well as their symbolic role in the building of the modern nation-state of Iraq.

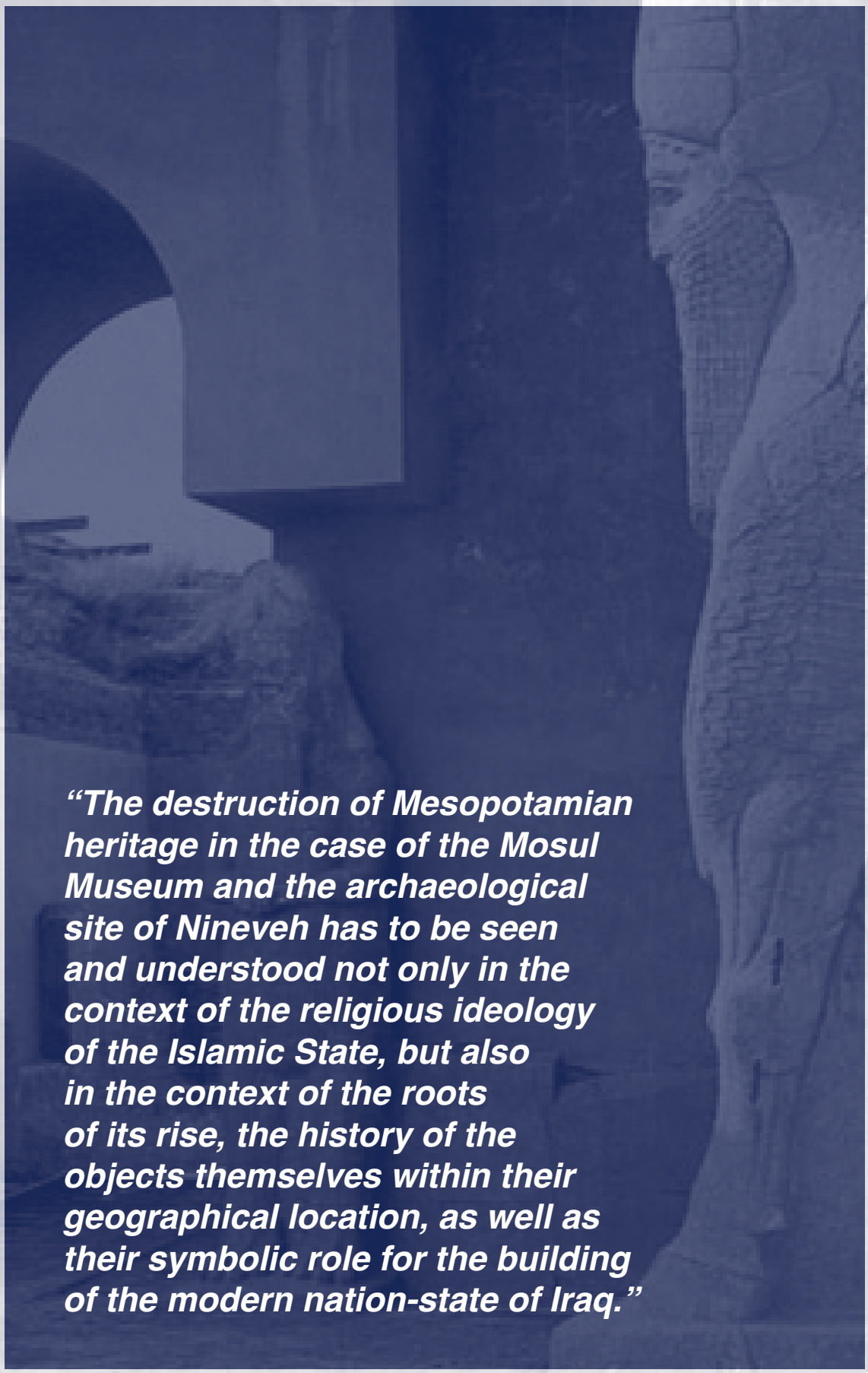
For the purpose of understanding this deep entanglement, it is necessary to open with an overview of the history of Near Eastern Archaeology and its role in the nation-building of Iraq.

Near Eastern Archaeology, Iraq and the rise of the Islamic State

Near Eastern Archaeology developed in the early nineteenth century simultaneously to an increase in the imperialistic interest of the European Great Powers in the Middle East. As outlined in detail by Magnus T. Bernhardsson in Reclaiming a plundered past in 2005, the emergence of Near Eastern Archaeology can be dated back to the very origins of the first field excavations in Iraq. The first archaeological excavations were conducted at Nineveh (what is today part of Mosul) when the country was still under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Starting with the Brit Claudius James Rich and his research about Nineveh, the place quickly attracted the attention of the French government, which sent Paul Emile Botta to Mosul to start excavating. It was also in Mosul that Hormuzd Rassam was born in 1826. Rassam later became known as the first native archaeologist to conduct scientific field excavations and he also became a loyal advocate of the British crown, resulting in a deep rivalry with the French adversaries. In the following decades, the territory of today's Iraq became an arena for the competition between the European Great Powers. England and France started launching large-scale field excavations in the former ancient Assyrian capitals Nineveh, Nimrud, and Khorsabad, which were sponsored by their political leaders in order to fill the national museums with treasures for national prestige. In the 1850s, the excavation areas were already divided into French and British territories, leaving Khorsabad to the French expedition and the Tell Kuyunjik of Nineveh to the British. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Germany joined the competition with large excavations in Uruk, Babylon, Assur, and others, as did the United States with their excavation in Nippur (Bernhardsson, 2005). With the beginning of World War I, the connection between archaeology and colonial politics became most apparent in the work of the key figures Gertrude Bell and Thomas Edward Lawrence (known as *Lawrence from Arabia*). Both British archaeologists played a significant political role in the Middle East, with Lawrence being involved in the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans, and Gertrude Bell becoming known for her work for British Intelligence when the Ottoman Empire was about to fall apart. Her extensive travel experiences in the Middle East and her in-depth knowledge about its landscape and society, which were precisely described in her diaries, including details about different clans and their power relations (Alexander, 2008), helped her to gain political power. This later enabled her to directly influence the future of the Middle East by suggesting Faisal to become the king of the newly-built Iraqi monarchy after the British and French had divided Western Asia and the territory of Iraq had fallen under British mandate. Overnight, the geographical and political set up of the Middle East had been fundamentally changed: instead of a socio-political process of nation-building with natural boundaries oriented towards linguistic and cultural groups, the colonial history and the subsequent artificial division of the Middle East according to

the Asia Minor Agreement of 1916 led to the creation of the modern state of Iraq in 1920, with new, arbitrarily demarcated state boundaries. In this context, it is not necessary to note that the establishment of boundaries correlates with the discovery of oil, and that the boundaries were later corrected on the basis of pipeline routes (Kneissl, 2015). According to Mary Ann Tetréault, Iraq can be considered the most perverse example of boundary demarcation, as it incorporated the three former Ottoman districts of Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul, from which the first one had a dense Sunni population, the second one was mainly inhabited by Shi'a Arabs, and Mosul was known for being a center for Sunni Muslim Kurds (Tetréault, 2008, p.140). This statement can be misleading, as it neglects the fact that Iraq's socio-political structure is much more complex. Despite the religious disagreements, the general population in Iraq, whether they were Sunnis or Shi'a, lived peacefully together until the intervention of the US. Nevertheless, the statement contains some truth in so far as it caused "Iraq's chronic problem with 'state building' […] rooted in its troubled history as a multicultural state governed by members of only one group" (Tetréault, 2008, p.140). A brief look at the current cultural composition of the Iraqi state reveals the complexity of Iraq's internal struggle for cohesion: all in all, the Iraqi state is fragmented into about 150 tribes of different religious groups, from which the major groups exert significant influence due to political representation and confederation among each other (Abid, 2015, p.14). A rather simplistic segmentation of Iraq's inhabitants illustrates the state's population in two layers according to their ethnic and religious affiliation: based on the statistics of the Central Intelligence Agency, Arabs constitute the majority, with 75 – 80% of the population (from which 20.000 – 50.000 are Marsh Arabs), followed by Kurds with 15 – 20%, and Turkmen with around 5%. The minority groups of Assyrians, Aramaens, and Shabaks are estimated to be under 5%. Religious affiliations are intermixed within the groups, with 99% being Muslims, divided into 55 – 60% Shi'a (from which the majority are Arabs) and about 40% Sunnis. Christians, Yezidis, Sabean Mandaeans, Baha'is, and Zoroastrians constitute less than 1% of the population. Jewish and other religions are under 0.1% (CIA, 2016; Abid, 2015). However, a majority of the Shi'a are Arabs, whereas a large part of the Sunni population consists of Turkmen as well as 80% of the Kurds (Abid 2015, pp.22-23). Composed of Chaldaens, Assyrians, Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Catholic, Armenian Apostolic and Armenian Catholic, Protestants, as well as Latin Catholics, the Christian community in Iraq proves to be the most diverse, although it has experienced a massive decline of 50% since the fall of Saddam Hussein (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016, p.10).

In response to the challenge of new state boundaries, different movements emerged with the goal to transcend domestic divisions and provide a political system that is able to integrate the various ethnic and religious groups (Tetréault, 2008). Kamyar Abdi identifies three main ideological streams of national identity and political agenda, which will be significantly important for the Mosul case (Abdi, 2008). The first ideology of pan-Arabism arose during the time of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Abdi, 2008, 5) and embedded the Iraqi state into the larger context of the Arab world, where it had once



(M.chohan, 2007/ PD)

"The destruction of Mesopotamian heritage in the case of the Mosul Museum and the archaeological site of Nineveh has to be seen and understood not only in the context of the religious ideology of the Islamic State, but also in the context of the roots of its rise, the history of the objects themselves within their geographical location, as well as their symbolic role for the building of the modern nation-state of Iraq."

existed (e.g. during the Abbasid caliphate), thus resisting the artificial boundaries of the state as imposed by the European Great Powers. De Cesari and Davis already argued that supporters of this vision are mainly from the Sunni minority, as they would form the majority in this constellation (De Cesari, 2015; Davis, 2005). With the fall of the monarchy in the late 1950s, an Iraqi nationalism emerged that was based on the common history of pre-Islamic times, emphasising Iraq as the "home of the Babylonians, Akkadian and Sumerian civilisation" (Bernhardsson, 2005, p.8).

With the ascendancy of the Ba'ath party in Iraq and the rise of Saddam Hussein in particular, we reach the third nationalistic ideology, described by Kamyar Abdi as the *cult of personality* (Abdi 2008), in which ancient Mesopotamian culture received a new political face. Instrumentalised to build a common national identity that would unite the Iraqi people, Hussein "selected elements from ancient Mesopotamian history and imagery, [and] incorporated them into a new Iraqi national identity and symbolism associated with it […]" (Abdi, 2008, 4). Based on this nationalist political agenda, the construction of a new identity quickly developed into a propaganda machine depicting Hussein as the successor of Nebuchadnezzar II. His inauguration was followed by large-scale building projects, such as his palace on the ancient ruins of the ziggurat, the ancient city of Babylon, and the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II on the exact spot of the former ancient palace. In the tradition of ancient Mesopotamian rulers, the bricks carried inscriptions such as, "this was built by Saddam, son of Nebuchadnezzar, to glory of Iraq" (Damon, 2013), thus placing Saddam Hussein directly within the genealogical lineage of ancient kings (Bernhardsson, 2005; Parzinger, 2012; Damon, 2013). In this way, Mesopotamian heritage became not merely connected to but rather a symbol of a regime known for committing atrocities against its own population: aside from the victims of the following wars with Iran and Kuwait, Human Rights Watch estimated the amount of executions of government opponents ordered by the government of Saddam Hussein to be around 250,000 (HRW, 2012).

After that, US forces invaded Iraq in 2003, joined by British forces, in an attempt to depose the Iraqi president. Once again, oil was an underlying factor. The Western interference correlated with the nationalisation of oil companies in Iraq by Saddam Hussein (Kneissl, 2015). Thus, the first building to be occupied by the US forces was the Ministry of Oil, leaving cultural institutions unguarded. In the background of these events, a new era of cultural destruction was introduced. Within the following years, Iraq experienced serious lootings as well as war-related and intentional destruction of the state's heritage.

Rise of the Islamic State: Ideology and Propaganda

The departure of the US Army in 2011 and the following De- Ba'athification process of removing former party affiliates left the country shattered and eventually paved the way for the foundation of the Islamic State. Founded in 2006, the Islamic State unexpectedly

appeared on the international stage in 2014, when it conquered large parts of western and northern Iraq after having already held parts of Syria under its control for two years. According to De Cesari, “IS, while originated from al-Qaeda in Iraq, has absorbed and monopolised the Sunni resistance and with it former Iraqi Ba’athis officials who constitute an important part of its middle and upper cadre and who are surely familiar with the older practices and spectacles of power” (De Cesari, 2015). Thus, she further argues, the destruction of Mesopotamian heritage also refers to Saddam Hussein’s propaganda beside its explicit reference to the Qur’ān, developing into a new political symbolism.

Figure 2.
Destruction of Lamassu figure by ISIS militant (extract from IS propaganda video 00h04m28s, 2015/ PD)

The Case of Mosul

In regard to the ideology and propaganda strategy of the Islamic State, the case of Mosul plays a significant role. With its history, diverse cultural heritage, and geographical position, it is a good starting point for further research into the destruction of heritage caused by the Salafi jihadist militant group. Monitoring operations and detailed damage assessments of the city allow us to gain insight into the discrepancies between the actual on-site destruction and the message that the militant group was distributing to international audiences. The ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiative (henceforth abbreviated to ASOR CHI), founded in 2014 with the aim to implement the protection of cultural property through damage assessment, raising global awareness, and contriving emergency and post-war responses, recently published a report on their damage documentation in Mosul (Danti, et al. 2017).

Through their monitoring operations in recaptured areas, the following statistics could be collected (numbers rising):

> As of July 12, 2017, we have reported 87 individual incidents of damage to religious heritage including mosques (47 incidents), churches (26 incidents), shrines (10 incidents), and cemeteries (4 incidents). We have reported 42 individual incidents of damage to secular sites, including University buildings (23 incidents), libraries (8 incidents), museums (4 incidents), and other buildings (7 incidents). Lastly we have documented 27 individual incidents of damage impacting archaeological sites, including 24 at Nineveh and one each to Bashtapia, Qara Serai and Deir Mar Elia. In all, ASOR CHI has recorded damage to 102 individual sites in Mosul, and the number is rising as more photographs and videos are released from liberated regions. (Danti, M. et al, 2017)

The numbers reveal complex damage to all types of buildings, including non-religious and religious sites. In fact, various scholars have already pointed out that the heaviest wave of destruction was carried out on Islamic heritage (De Cesari, 2015; Romey, 2015), and the recent destruction of the an-Nūrī Mosque shows that the Islamic State did not exclude any type of heritage, not even their own. However, the destruction of Mesopotamian heritage seems to have a different symbolic meaning for the militant group. Despite the diversity of Mosul's heritage and the richness of archaeological finds from prehistoric times to Islamic times exhibited in the Mosul Museum, the Islamic State chose to only broadcast the destruction of specific objects, namely the *lamassu* statue of the Nergal Gate in Nineveh and other Mesopotamian antiquities inside the Mosul Museum, although the actual destruction carried out by the militant group included all types of heritage from prehistoric to modern times. But what makes Mosul and its Mesopotamian heritage so important for the history of Iraq and the Islamic State's ideological warfare?

In the backdrop of the history of Iraq, the role of Near Eastern Archaeology, and the rise of the Islamic State, Mosul represents various conflict layers that are of central importance to understanding the ongoing struggle and the associated symbolism of destruction: 1) The geographical position of Mosul in the disputed area between the Iraqi state and Iraqi Kurdistan, with proximity to the Turkish and Syrian borders, has turned the city into the setting for a *proxy war* between Arabs, Kurds, Da'esh, and other powers. 2) Mosul has symbolic meaning for the Islamic State because of its Sunni population and the great an-Nūrī Mosque. It is the place where Abū Bakr al-Baghdadi had his first public appearance in July 2014 and accepted the title of caliph after the new caliphate had been formally announced by Da'esh (Mindock, 2017). 3) Another factor is the importance of Mosul as an economic center due to its large oil refineries and well- known textile industry. The role of oil in the politics of Iraq has already been mentioned throughout this article. Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world, with an estimated 280 billion barrels of oil (Kneissl, 2015), and the most important oil reserves are located in Mosul and Kirkuk (Schlacht um Mossul, 2016). 4) Mosul's cultural diversity and importance as a cultural center rose due to the founding of Mosul University in 1967 as one of the biggest centers

Figure 3. Lamassu figures in Nineveh (Makinano 2008/ PD).

for education and research in the Middle East. With a population of over 1.5 million inhabitants, the capital of the province of Nineveh was known as a multiethnic and multi-religious city that unified the cultural diversity of Iraq's population, with Yezidis, Turkmen, and Assyrians living side by side with Arabs and Kurds until the Islamic State occupied the city. Although freedom of religion is guaranteed by Article Three of the Iraqi constitution, the situation for minorities has increasingly deteriorated since the fall of Saddam Hussein. Islam remains the state religion and a reference point in the execution of establishing rights, thus creating a juridical contradiction, as every new law has to fall in line with both Islamic thought and with fundamental democratic rights (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016, p.8). After the take-over of power, the Islamic State immediately started with a systematic ethnic cleansing program to eradicate minorities.

In this complex and fragile construction, the importance of Mosul for Near Eastern Archaeology adds another layer of significance. As already outlined, Nineveh (which is today part of Mosul) was an ancient Mesopotamian city that served as a capital of the Assyrian empire in the seventh century B.C, and seems to have been the geographical starting point for European field excavations in Iraq (Bernhardsson, 2005). Additionally, the Mosul Museum was the second largest museum in Iraq until its destruction in 2015. Founded in 1952, it exhibited archaeological artifacts from prehistoric times up to the Islamic era, representing thousands of years of history. The museum is located on the west side of the city of Mosul, where the palace gardens of King Faisal were once situated (Albertson, 2015). Starting with only

one exhibition hall for discoveries from Nimrud and Hatra, the museum quickly grew, and in 1958 the Directorate General of Antiquities added a second hall for antiquities from the prehistoric to the Islamic times (Directorate-General of Antiquities, 1958, p.3). The collection continued to grow and was transferred to a new building in 1972, where it remained until its destruction in 2015 (Mohammed, 2015). The museum in its current structure is divided into four sections: hall one is dedicated to Assyrian artifacts from Nimrud, the second hall to Hellenistic and Parthian artifacts from Hatra, the third to the Islamic era, and the last to prehistoric finds mainly excavated in Hassuna (Albertson, 2015). With the start of the Iraq War in 2003, Iraq entered a long period of destruction. Following the invasion by the United States, museums and other cultural institutions experienced systematic lootings and devastations. Within a few days after the fall of Saddam Hussein, around 15,200 artifacts disappeared and entire archaeological sites were destroyed and pillaged (Müller-Karpe, 2011, p.13). Along with the National Museum in Baghdad, the Mosul Museum also suffered severe lootings from which it was not able to fully recover. After the war, the museum was closed for reconstruction for several years. It was set to be reopened in 2014, but the Islamic State took power and occupied the museum in June 2014. On 26 February 2015 the militant group disseminated a propaganda video showing the destruction of the museum and of the *lamassu* statue of the Nergal Gate of Nineveh (Shaheen, 2015) (Fig.2). The *lamassu* is a protective deity, usually depicted as a winged bull or lion with a human head, and is connected to Assyrian culture. The face of the statue is rendered in the typical style of Assyrian illustrations, with a strictly ordered, curly beard. On its head, the *lamassu* wears a double crown in the shape of a bullhorn, an important attribute of a god. Consisting of human, animal, and godly elements, *lamassu* served as a guard, placed on entrances of palaces or city gates to protect the citizens or the king from attacks by hostile groups (Fig.3). In the video, a representative explains the destruction as an act of iconoclasm and refers to phrases from the Quran. The speech is accompanied by strong-voiced chorales of jihadi *nasheed*. The symbolism of destruction could be easily explained with religious motivations, if not for the fact that the Islamic State itself had commented on their motives in their online magazine *Dabiq*, drawing a very different picture. In their eighth volume, as already pointed out by Chiara De Cesari, the Islamic State directly links the destruction of the Mosul Museum and the lamassu of the Nineveh site to its entangled history with Near Eastern Archaeology and European colonial policies by stating that “the kuffār had unearthed these statues and ruins in recent generations and attempted to portray them as part of a cultural heritage and identity that the Muslims of Iraq should embrace and be proud of” (De Cesari, 2015; Dabiq 8, pp.22-23). They further connect the cultural heritage to Iraqi nation building: “The various apostate puppet regimes set up by the crusaders after the colonial era all have modified versions of the first flag designed by Mark Sykes […]” (De Cesari 2015; Dabiq 9, p.22). With these statements, the militant group not only points out an ideological stand against the division of the Middle East in accordance with the Asia Minor agreement and the following construction of a modern state, but it also refers to the nationalistic political agenda of Saddam Hussein. In this context, the usage

of the lamassu for the logo of the US Forces in 2011 becomes the icing on the cake and proves how much Mesopotamian heritage has been used symbolically for political purposes and legitimations of power and war (De Cesari, 2015).

The Mosul case proves that the reasons behind the destruction of heritage by the Islamic State are multifaceted and accompanied by complex symbolism. Mesopotamian heritage has become part of several institutional programs throughout this time as a response to the search for stability and social cohesion. In particular, the example of the Mosul Museum and the lamassu statue reveals a deep entanglement of Mesopotamian heritage with the colonial history of Iraq and the following state building process. Spread in a spectacular manner, the propaganda videos of the Islamic State were mainly made to instill terror in the Western world. However, the massive destruction of Mosul also carries another underlying message: it is a symbolic act of the destruction of a past that is entangled with a painful history that began with the intervention of Western powers in the Middle East. The usage of the past by appropriating heritage for the promotion and legitimation of ideological concepts likely leads to its destruction or to the creation of future *uncomfortable heritage*. While institutions all over the world have already started planning for the future of the city, the question of the future of Mosul's society remains open, and Iraq will soon be faced with the challenge of (hopefully collectively) deciding on how to deal with its traumatic past. Whichever way rebuilding and conservation practices are carried out in the future, this paper has shown that the entanglements of Iraq's heritage with its history need to be carefully considered in order to avoid repeating past mistakes.

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Figures

Figure 1: By Staff Sgt. JoAnn Makinano [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ANimrud_081119-F-5855M-033.jpg>

Figure 2 & Figure p.12: Extract from IS propaganda video reportedly released by Media Office of the Nineveh branch of the Islamic State (IS) 00h04m28s. 26th February 2015 [Public domain] <http://alrai.com/article/1023177/%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%88%D9%85%20%D9%88%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%86%D9%88%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A7?page=-26>

Figure 3: By Staff Sgt. JoAnn Makinano [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b9/Nimrud_081119-F-5855M-087.jpg>

Figure p.17: By Staff Sgt. JoAnn Makinano [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iraq;_Nimrud_-_Assyria,_Lamassu%27s_Guarding_Palace_Entrance.jpg>

Isabelle Mühlstädt

The Buddha Statues of Bamiyan

Analysis of the conservation process and its political forces

Introduction

Since the destruction of the two monumental Buddha statues in Afghanistan in 2001, the conservation process has become an international affair. UNESCO became involved and received the mandate to coordinate the preservation of the cultural sites in Afghanistan together with the support of international experts and various donor countries, which financed the activities for the security and conservation of the site. Thus, UNESCO established an Expert Working Group to advise the Afghan authorities.

The objectives of this case study include the evaluation of the conservation ideologies and concepts proposed for the conservation of the Buddha statues, their relationships with the political intentions of the various nations involved in the conservation process, and the political and ideological forces that influenced this process. The evaluation of the decision-making process and the analysis of the conservation approaches will hopefully uncover some lessons that can be applied to future cases of post-conflict situations and associated international conservation efforts.

Description of the site and historical background

The two monumental niches of the Buddha statues form a part of the World Heritage Site of the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley, which

consists of eight separate component sites within the valley. The site is currently on the List of World Heritage in Danger and inscribed under criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), and (vi).

The Bamiyan Valley is located 246km northwest of Kabul, Afghanistan. The valley is set within the mountains of the Hindu Kush in the central highlands of Afghanistan (World Heritage Centre, 2003, p.19). The Buddha statues were carved into the stone cliffs of Bamiyan Valley; their bodies and clothes were molded with stucco and colourfully painted, standing in niches and surrounded by mural paintings. One statue measured 38m and was carved into the eastern part of the cliff, while the taller 55m-high statue was located in the western part of the cliff. The cliff also includes countless manmade caves and tunnels used as sanctuaries, council halls, and monk's cells (World Heritage Centre, 2003, p.21).

The destroyed monuments had been the biggest Buddha statues worldwide, dating back to the sixth century BC. Through the discovery of pieces of wood and ropes within the destroyed fragments of the statues, the subsequent C14 analysis enabled a more precise dating. This analysis dated the small Buddha to AD 507, the taller Buddha to AD 551, and the mural paintings surrounding the Buddhas were dated between the late fifth and early ninth centuries AD (World Heritage Centre, 2010, p.67).

The statues had been part of a former important Buddhist center in central Asia and a destination for a Buddhist pilgrimage that formed one of the branches of the Silk Road. The valley, with its long history, shows Indian, Hellenistic, Roman, Sasanian, and Islamic influences (World Heritage Centre, 2003).

The first excavation and research was conducted in 1922 by French archaeologist André Godard, who had been accompanied by Joseph Hackin and Jean Carl (World Heritage Centre, 2003, p.26). However, the most important contributions to the archaeological research and history of Bamiyan were delivered by Zemaryalai Tarzi, president of the Association for the Protection of Afghan Archaeology, along with Kosaku Maeda, Akira Miyaji, Takayasu Hugushi, and Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter.

Even 16 years after the destruction of the Buddha statues, the site is still on the List of World Heritage in Danger, threatened by the risk of collapse of the Giant Buddha niches, irreversible deterioration of the mural paintings, and anti-personnel mines within the caves of the cliff, as well as facing other threats such as civil unrest (World Heritage Centre, 2017a).

Political context and decision-making process

In 1989, the Soviet troops lost the guerrilla war in Afghanistan and were pulled out after ten years of war. Thereafter a civil war broke out between various religious and fundamentalist groups. Finally, in 1996 the religious fundamentalist Taliban formed an Islamic state and took control of most parts of Afghanistan. However, the UN did

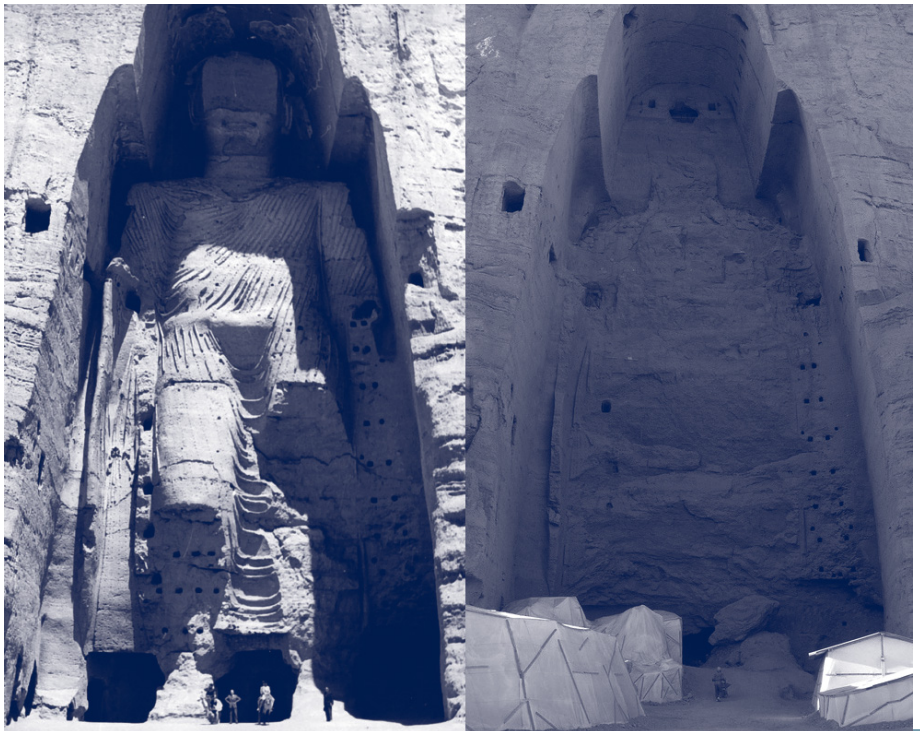


Figure 1. *Bamiyan's Budha before and after destruction. (UNESCO 2008; Montgomery 1963 / CC BY-SA 3.0)*

not recognise their government due to human rights violations (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2014).

Increasingly, the Taliban became seen as the image of a radical Islamic enemy in the Western media (Falser, 2010, p.83). However, it is interesting to point out that Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar used diplomatic language in 1999 to discuss the cultural heritage of Afghanistan:

> All historical cultural heritage are regarded as an integral part of the heritage of Afghanistan and therefore belong to Afghanistan, but naturally also to the international community. Any excavation or trading in cultural heritage objects is strongly forbidden and will be punished in accordance with the law.
>
> (…) The famous Buddhist statues at Bamiyan were made before the event of Islam in Afghanistan, and are amongst the largest of their kind in Afghanistan and in the world. In Afghanistan there are no Buddhist to worship the statues. Since Islam came to Afghanistan until the present period the statues have not been damaged. The government regards the statues with serious respect and considers the position of their protection today to be the same as always. The government further considers the Bamiyan statues as an example of a potential major source of income for Afghanistan from international visitors. *(2000, cited in Falser, 2010, pp.83/84)*

Figure 2. *Landscape of the Bamiyan Valley with the empty niches of the Buddha statues (Scar 2012 / PD).*

In 1999, the UN imposed strict trade sanctions on Afghanistan, which were followed by a serious famine in 2001 (Falser, 2010, p.84). The situation escalated when a representative of UNESCO offered the Taliban government money for the protection of the Buddha statues in Bamiyan, which had been threatened by nearby military actions. Members of the Taliban were outraged by the offer, as the Western world only offered money to save statues instead of seeking to aid the millions of starving Afghan people (Crosette, 2001).

In reaction, the Taliban destroyed the Buddha statues in March 2001 using dynamite and artillery. Falser describes the act as performative iconoclasm, since it was long planned and enacted for the international media (2010, p.82). Even so, this was not the first attack on the statues, as the area suffered from various religiously-motivated attacks over the previous centuries. The result of the 2001 demolition was the weakening of the walls of the niche and the loss of major parts of the statues (Tarzi, 2004).

After the terror attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001, the USA and its allies started a NATO mission, building the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to fight the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Soon, the Taliban regime was expelled from Afghanistan and a new government was put in place. However, the Taliban continued to operate in exile in Pakistan (Steinberg, 2011).

Two years after the destruction of the two Buddhas, in June 2003, the Bamiyan Valley was inscribed as a World Heritage Site. The statement of outstanding universal value in the site's nomination file included the

destruction as a “testimony to recurring reactions to iconic art, the most recent being the internationally condemned deliberate destruction of the two standing Buddha statues in March 2001” (World Heritage Centre, 2017b).

The Afghan Government entrusted UNESCO with the mandate of coordinating all cultural projects for the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley due to a lack of capacity within the responsible national institutions to create appropriate conservation and management plans for the destroyed cultural properties (World Heritage Centre, 2017c). Further efforts and coordination were also undertaken in Jam and Herat and at the destroyed National Museum in Kabul. UNESCO established a Bamiyan Expert Working Group in 2002. At annual meetings, further activities for the conservation and management of the Bamiyan Valley were coordinated and the Afghan government received advice for the implementation of decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee for the World Heritage property of Bamiyan. Objectives of the Expert Working Group included the long-term stability of the Giant Buddha niches, capacity building, documentation, implementation of the World Heritage Convention, and ensured site security through demining and the prevention of illicit excavations and looting (Manhart, 2009, p.39).

The activities were funded by international donors, including, among others, Japan, Italy, and Switzerland. The conservation of the destroyed site was divided into different phases, starting with emergency operations like securing and documenting fragments, collecting data (as all files of the Afghan State Conservation Office were lost), and creating a 3D model of the destroyed Buddha statues (ICOMOS, 2005). The National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo developed a master plan for the conservation in 2004 and updated it in 2006. A Cultural Master Plan was later created by the Aachen Center for Documentation and Conservation in 2005 and approved by the Afghan Government in 2006.

In 2014, the mandate for the NATO mission ended and most of the foreign troops left the country, while a smaller NATO mission continued to support the Afghan security forces (Politische Bildung, 2017). In 2017 alone, more than ten terror attacks took place in Afghanistan. The country has yet to reach a state of stability and security, and the Taliban demonstrate an ongoing threat to the people and cultural property of Afghanistan (Polititische Bildung, 2017).

Conservation approaches

The destruction of a monument is a powerful symbolic act, but equally powerful is the symbolism of the re-erection of a monument. The step of reconstructing a monument needs in-depth analysis and consideration. In the aftermath of the destruction of the Buddha statues of Bamiyan, international experts and the international public debated many different approaches. The two main conservation philosophies discussed were to

either leave the space open or to conduct an anastylosis with preserved fragments of the statues. A more alternative approach proposed by Japanese artist Hiro Yamagata was to recreate the Buddha statues through a gigantic laser beam project (Schou, 2005).

UNESCO aimed to leave the niches of the destructed monuments open as a memorial to the act of vandalism by the Taliban (Petzet, 2009, p.46 & Nordland, 2014). This conservation philosophy seeks to stop the process of deterioration and to undertake only activities aimed at preserving the current state of conservation. This practice corresponds with Alois Riegl's conservation philosophy regarding the value of traces and age, wherein restoration would be an equally unjustified intervention into the fabric of the monument as the initial destruction itself. For the Buddha statues, this would mean that the violent destruction became part of their history, so the traces of vandalism should not be erased. However, Riegl also stated that conservation measures may be undertaken to slow down the process of decay for outstanding works (Schmidt, 2008, pp.46-47).

The other approach was to conduct an anastylosis with the preserved fragments. For a long time, it was unclear whether the secured pieces would be sufficient or whether enough data would be available to reconstruct the Buddhas. It was estimated that approximately 25% of the preserved fragments belong to the outer surface of the Buddhas and could be used for an anastylosis (Urbat and Aubel, 2006, p.89). The Venice Charter (1964) outlines that only anastylosis, or, in other words, "the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts", is permitted on excavation sites, and that the additional material used must be visually distinct from the original fragments (Schmidt, 2008, p.73). Thus, it is questionable whether enough data and preserved fragments will be available for a future anastylosis, or whether such an endeavor would simply end up producing a copy of the former Buddha statues.

The Afghan government wanted at least one statue reconstructed as a symbolic victory over the still-threatening Taliban (Petzet, 2002, p.46). This would be a strong symbolic act for the Afghan community, which is an important factor and a political act, as it demonstrates the position of the Afghan government toward the religiously fundamentalist Taliban. The wish to reconstruct a monument that was not part of their religious background is a strong message in a strict Muslim context. It demonstrates that the Buddha statues became part of Afghan cultural identity and that they were valued and continue to be valued as such. Jan Assmann states that "Cultural memory works by reconstructing, that is, it always relates its knowledge to an actual and contemporary situation" (1995, p.130). In this way, the Taliban's act of terror and destruction of the Buddhas added another layer of value to the site, and their reconstruction would foster the Afghan cultural identity after years of war and terror, which is an essential part of nation building and the rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

In 2012, the German team from the Technical University of Munich (TU Munich) led by Michael Petzet began an unauthorised partial reconstruction of the “feet” and “legs” of the smaller of the two Buddhas without consulting UNESCO or the Expert Working Group. The team started the reconstruction with iron rods, reinforced concrete, and bricks. Petzet, a former president of ICOMOS Germany, claimed that they “just wanted to preserve what can be preserved”, and that everything they did was discussed with the Afghan authorities. The Afghan government requested the partial-reconstruction of one Buddha niche at the 11th Expert Working Group meeting in 2012. The response of the experts was that, at that point, no sufficient data was available to reconstruct one of the statues, nor were there enough financial resources (Emmerling and Petzet, 2016, p.151).

Andrea Bruno, the architectural consultant to UNESCO for the past 40 years, confirmed that the work was carried out “against UNESCO’s decision [taken in 2011] not to rebuild the Buddhas”, and said the organisation was not informed (Martini and Rivetti, 2014). Moreover, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies commented on the incident in 2014, noting, “Concern has been expressed at the appropriateness of the intervention in the lower gallery of the Eastern Buddha niche” (World Heritage Centre, 2014).

The Expert Working Group explicitly expressed at its eighth and again at its eleventh Expert Meeting that no projects should be implemented unless the Expert Working Group had discussed them and received the Afghan authorities’ confirmation, and that detailed proposals should be prepared in advance for review by the experts of the Expert Working Group. In the case of major interventions, a proposal for submission to the World Heritage Committee should be prepared, which is in line with the Operational Guidelines. Moreover, the decision should be based on a Heritage Impact Assessment, as well as on the project’s technical and financial feasibility.

The unauthorised actions of the German team from TU Munich lead to various questions, such as whether enough scientific data had been available by the time the reconstruction began. Again, the Expert Meeting report from 2012 stated that at that moment, sufficient scientific data was not available for an anastylosis (Emmerling and Petzet, 2016, p.151). It is also unclear how it was possible for an international team acting on its own authority to start the reconstruction without an overall agreed approach to the conservation and presentation of the property.

After the last meeting in 2013, no Expert Meeting took place until 2016, when the Government of Afghanistan officially requested the reconstruction of at least one statue on behalf of the people of Afghanistan. The current decision is that the western niche of the taller Buddha will be left empty as a testimony to the tragic act of destruction, while the eastern Buddha will be reconstructed using the preserved fragments. However, both approaches show the importance of the interpretation of the site either as an act of resistance or a place of memory, as these interpretation choices create different values for the site.

Heritage conservation as a political instrument

The following section will critically evaluate the decision-making processes and will try to highlight weaknesses of the Expert Working Group as a mechanism to support destabilised governments and their cultural properties. These concerns are mostly related to the strong influence of the international community on the decisions made in the past years. It is essential to say at the beginning that the international preservation efforts were a huge success and that the Expert Working Group and the Afghan government made great improvements concerning the state of conservation, security, and research of the destructed Buddha statues. However, it is important to raise awareness about challenges in the decision-making process in order to effectively approach these problems in the future and to learn lessons for comparable cases in post-conflict situations.

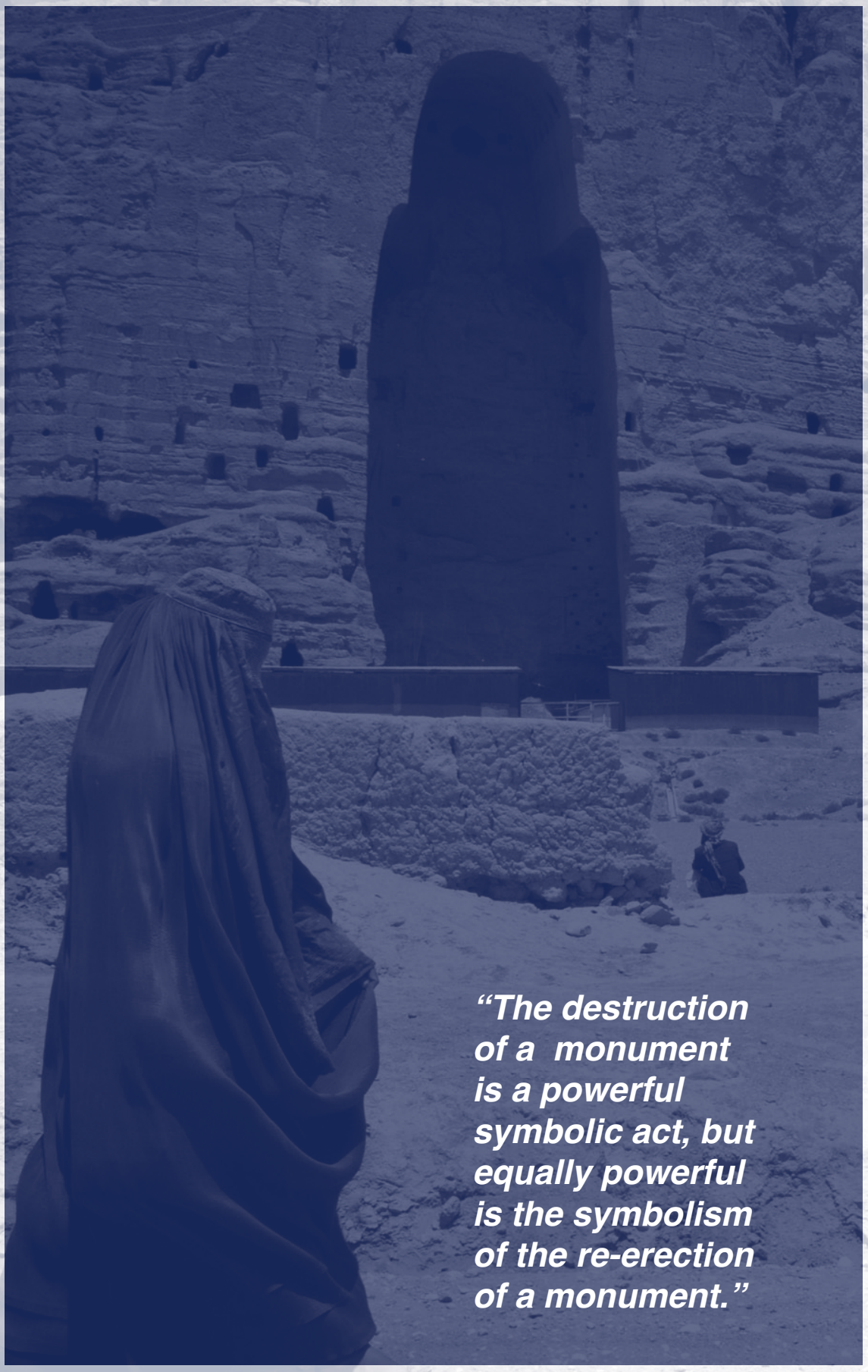
States in a conflict or post-conflict situation often face a lack of organisation and resources for taking care of their cultural properties in an adequate way. Therefore, it is a natural phenomenon that over such a long period of time, the power relations between the Afghan government and the international community have evolved and that countries might have overextended their duties. Moreover, international efforts to supply technical and financial support to such an extent are not simply based on altruism, but they also have political motivations.

Institutional framework

The decisions for the management and conservation of the Bamiyan site fall under the authority of the Ministry of Information and Culture and under the direct supervision of the Deputy Minister for Culture. There is also a shared responsibility for cultural sites on an operational level between the Institute of Archaeology and the Department for the Protection and Rehabilitation of Historical Monuments within the Ministry of Information and Culture in Kabul (UNESCO, 2011).

The Expert Working Group is supposed to give recommendations, to encourage the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture to carry out certain approved actions, and to help coordinate between UNESCO, donor countries, international experts, and Afghan authorities. Furthermore, the Expert Working Group conducts advisory missions. Baer and Snickars define governance as:

> an operational mode according to which public or governmental and private actors – especially target groups, beneficiaries, and third parties – cooperate in managing public policies that include program formulation and implementation. Such cooperation is achieved through activating, combining, and exchanging policy resources (e.g., law, money, political support, time, and consensus) within given or reshaped general institutional setting (e.g., decision-making rules for a given policy). Baer and Snickars. Baer and Snickars (2000, p.146)



(WDVIDSHUB 2012 / PD)

"The destruction of a monument is a powerful symbolic act, but equally powerful is the symbolism of the re-erection of a monument."

The Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley presents a special form of governance of a cultural property, as the Afghan authorities are dependent on the financial contributions and are morally bound to the conservation policies of the World Heritage Convention. UNESCO not only became a powerful interest group, but moreover the Afghan authorities agreed to a coalition with them for the production of conservation policies. The Expert Working Group offers an institutionalised forum that allows experts, together with representatives from Afghanistan and UNESCO, to develop strategies for the conservation of the statues. However, the responsibility for determining the conservation policies lies in the hands of a rather small group of experts and representatives. The Expert Working Group recommends the implementation of the agreed-on strategies, but through funding responsibilities and the lack of public participation, this form of cultural heritage governance presents a rather top-down approach.

Funding and financial contributions

While the international monetary aid may seem altruistic, the reality shows that the donor countries have more control through financial contributions. The efforts of the donor countries played a major role in the preservation of the Bamiyan Valley. From 2003 to 2017, the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust contributed USD 7,170,807, UNESCO/Switzerland Funds-in-Trust donated USD 159,000 from 2011 to 2012, the UNESCO/Italy Funds-in-Trust donated USD 900,000 in 2013 (World Heritage Centre, 2017a), the Korean Funds-in-Trust donated USD 5,435,284 from 2013 to 2016 (World Heritage Centre, 2016), and the government of Germany granted approximately one million euros between 2002 and 2004 through ICOMOS Germany (UNESCO, 2011, p.84).

Each country has individual justifications for their investments in other countries, including, among others, prestige, economic partnership, and humanitarian aid. In the case of Germany's contributions, nation-building and the stabilisation of Afghanistan were crucial factors.

From 2009 to 2016, Germany invested 3,17 billion euros in Afghanistan to strengthen the economy, government, power generation (energy), and infrastructure, but also culture (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, 2016). The investment in specific areas such as these is a tool for stabilisation and nation-building in Afghanistan, which serves not only Afghanistan but also Germany itself. An official paper from the German Foreign Office states, "Frieden und Entwicklung in Afghanistan – Sicherheit für uns", implying that peace and development in Afghanistan would lead to global security. As Afghanistan was the operational and training base for terrorism until 2001, the stabilisation process was meant to help erase the operational base of the Taliban and Al-Qaida (Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 2008).

Figure 3. *The western Buddha statue before its destruction in 1963 (UNESCO; A Lezine,1963 / CC BY-SA 3.0).*

So in this case, the Bamiyan statues act as "a highly fertile environment for learning how to transform a destructive act into an opportunity to reinforce tolerance, peace and development through culture for future generations" (UNESCO, 2011, p.15).

Another dimension of funding is the aspect of control in the decision-making process. An article from Lauren Bursey (2014) for the Center For Art Law describes the intervention of the reconstruction work of Michael Petzet on the feet of the eastern Buddha. The article states that:

> Afghan monument protection law requires Afghan Government approval for changes made to heritage sites, which ICOMOS acknowledges, but due to funding control, UNESCO is the body with the real authority. Work was halted, not because the Afghans had a problem with ICOMOS' work and thus ordered it stopped, but because UNESCO felt that ICOMOS was rebuilding rather than only stabilizing the site. (Bursey 2014)

This expresses that UNESCO and donor countries indeed had the power to control decisions, and even enforce them against the will of the Afghan authorities if the activities were not in line with their conservation philosophies.

The imbalance of power is also demonstrated by the lack of financial investment by the Afghan government into the conservation of cultural heritage. Since the Afghan authorities were secure with a continuous flow of funds since its inscription on the World Heritage List, no priorities were set to provide financial contributions of their own. This oversight will lead to major problems when the international funding comes to an end. Therefore, UNESCO says that it is "high time that the State Party allocate minimum funding to the property" (World Heritage Centre, 2017a).

Technical and expert support

The unauthorised reconstruction of the feet of the eastern statue by Michael Petzet's team from TU Munich demonstrated that dominance not only appears through financial control, but also through the enforcement of conservation ideologies.

A closer look at the host venue for Expert Meetings and the composition of participants might also reveal an imbalance of power and the dominance of certain countries. For example, seven of the thirteen meetings between 2002 and 2016 took place in Germany, while three took place in Japan, and only one in Kabul. The German influence is further highlighted by the fact that the scaffolding was sponsored by the German Messerschmitt Foundation and exclusively transported by the German Army in August 2003 (World Heritage Centre, 2010, p.28).

Capacity building

The last analysis and conclusion by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in 2017 supports the above implications. The report states that the continuous Expert Working Group meetings were generally welcome, but points out that the benefits of an Expert Working Group serve to coordinate between international experts and institutions, and is "not meant to function as a mechanism for the management of the property" (World Heritage Centre, 2017d). Furthermore, it states that no progress on capacity building has been reported and encourages the State Party to create a programme to strengthen local and national capacities with regard to heritage conservation and management. These

Figure 4. *The site after destruction (WDVIDSHUB 2012 / PD).*

points demonstrate that, to a certain extent, the Expert Working Group has overstepped its bounds, and that the Afghan authorities currently lack self-reliance in the conservation and management process.

UNESCO has had the mandate for more than 16 years now. This leads to several questions, such as: When will this mandate and the help of the Expert Working Group come to an end? When will the Bamiyan Valley be removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger? And when will a degree of political stability and security be reached? It seems as if the Expert Working Group and the Afghan authorities have long settled for their role as a coalition in the decision-making process and do not take adequate actions to further Afghan autonomy. In order to empower the Afghan institutions, capacity building is of central importance. Even though a lot of improvement has been made in the conservation of the site without adequate national human resources, independence of the Afghan authorities has not yet been established.

Public participation

With The *Kabul Charter for Sustainable Heritage Development: Bringing Afghan People and Their Heritage Together* from 2010, UNESCO and the Afghan authorities explicitly note the importance of public participation for the conservation of the Buddha statues. However, there is no evidence that the Afghan authorities enabled or allowed for any form of community involvement. For example, they only state

that it is the will of the Afghan people to reconstruct at least one statue, but there is no documentation of an actual survey or of any form of public outreach.

Conclusion and recommendations

In the case of the destructed Buddha statues of Bamiyan, UNESCO and the international community undertook a great effort through financial and technical aid to support the Afghan government in times of war and terror. Since culture has been increasingly at the frontline of conflicts, UNESCO's Expert Working Group and the conservation process of the Bamiyan Valley created some relevant lessons for comparable cases in post-conflict situations. Some of these similar cases will also receive international assistance, such as, for example, the sites destroyed in Syria over the past years.

The evaluation of the conservation process and the role of UNESCO, the international experts, and donor countries in this crisis situation showed that:

The two main conservation approaches and the interpretation of the site were based on different conservation ideologies—the anastylosis as an act of resistance and the empty niche as a place of remembrance of the terror of the Taliban.

The unauthorised acts by the German team demonstrated that communication and reporting between all actors is essential, and that only activities that are in line with accepted guidelines and conventions and that are commonly agreed upon by the Afghan government, UNESCO, and international experts should be implemented.

The conservation process over the past fifteen years also showed a tendency of the Expert Working Group to exceed their coordination function and increasingly take responsibility for the management of the Bamiyan Valley.

The generous funding from donor countries was an essential factor for the successful preservation of the destroyed niches. However, the financial contributions should not be misused to impose influence in the decision-making process of the Bamiyan Valley.

The political ideology behind the funds from the German Federal Foreign Office was to support the nation-building process and the rehabilitation of Afghanistan in order to secure peace in their own country.

Another crucial factor is reestablishing self-reliance through capacity building. Therefore, the Afghan authorities should be strengthened and the government should show initiative, including providing funds for their own cultural projects.

And lastly, the involvement of state and civil society is crucial in order to avoid a top-

down approach. In this case, steps have allegedly been taken in that direction. However, there is no evidence that the Afghan authorities actually involved the local community or other stakeholders in their decision-making process for the conservation of the Buddha statues.

Recently, UNESCO established a general strategy to reinforce UNESCO's institutional and operational capacity to respond to threats to culture and heritage in the event of armed conflicts. The strategy builds on UNESCO's standards, technical expertise, and operational experience in the field of culture, and aims to "redu[ce] the vulnerability of cultural heritage and diversity before, during and in the aftermath of conflict" (UNESCO, 2015). The strategy is an important step, as it will provide operational guidelines that allow for a controllable, transparent, and inclusive approach for future missions.

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Figures

Figure 1: Left by UNESCO/A Lezine;Tsui [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons. Right by Carl Montgomery [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ATaller_Buddha_of_Bamiyan_before_and_after_destruction.jpg>

Figure 2: By Sgt. Ken Scar (U.S. Armed Forces) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:View_of_the_site_of_Buddahs_in_central_Afghanistan.jpg >

Figure 3: UNESCO/A Lezine;Tsui [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Buddha_Bamiyan_1963.jpg >

Figure p.26: By Ugarte, Carlos [CC BY-NC 2.0] via Flickr < https://www.flickr.com/photos/servinugarte/184174643 >

Figure 4 & p.34: By DVIDSHUB [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AFlickr_-_DVIDSHUB_-_Giant_standing_Buddhas_of_Bamiyan_still_cast_shadows_(Image_2_of_8).jpg >

(Unknown, aprox.1950) PD

Arman Ebrahimi

The Destruction of Reza Shah's Mausoleum

An effort to distort history

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the destruction of the mausoleum of Reza Shah, the first king of Pahlavi dynasty, by exploring the reasons and motivational factors behind the phenomenon of destroying the tombs of famous figures in Iran, which include politicians, writers, poets, athletes, musicians, religious minorities, and others. It can be traced back to the eleventh century, when Rashid Eldin Fazl Allah Hamedani's tomb was destroyed by Muslims ninety years after his death. As this phenomenon concerns the tombs of a variety of characters, or rather different rulers, the key questions that this paper aims to answer are: What role does a tomb as a commemorative building play and what is lost by destroying it? Also, what is gained by the destruction? What are the reasons, ideologies, or motivational factors for destroying commemorative buildings of renowned figures? By analysing the case of the destruction of the Mausoleum of Reza Shah, the paper will also address the wider question of the consequence of destroying such tombs or similar memorial buildings of renowned people in society.

Reza Shah's mausoleum

Reza Shah was the first democratically-elected king in Iran and he was the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty. He reigned in Iran from 15 December 1925 until 16 September 1941, when he was sent into exile as part of the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran. Subsequently, he spent the rest of his life in exile and died of a heart attack in 1944 in Johannesburg (Afra, 2017).

In May 1950, his body was sent to Iran for burial in Rey, a city to the south of Tehran, and a place of importance for religious people, as two important Shia leaders originated from there (Kavoshi, 2010). Reza Shah's son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, commanded a group of three renowned Iranian architects to build a mausoleum in honour of his father. The construction of the mausoleum was subject to both admiration and criticism, mostly from the political point of view. However, by the time the mausoleum was completed, it was condemned by the Tudeh party, who claimed that too much money had been spent on the building that could have instead been used to help economically disadvantaged people. Construction started in 1947 and finished in 1950. The building covered 9000 square meters, and it was 25 meters high. It was comprised of two floors, the upper one containing an entrance hall and an exhibition space, and the lower one dedicated to housing Reza Shah's tombstone, a black stone with a golden crown carved on it (Devos & Werner, 2014).

The Reza Shah's mausoleum was a unique building that, in terms of its style, reflected all the architectural discourses of its time. It illustrated how modern architecture relates to not only contemporary history, but also to Pahlavi's impression of Iran's past and present eras. The architect's aim was to build a structure that represented a modern king who had the desire to become an important figure in the list of great Iranians. The challenge was to build a structure that included all aspects of avant-gardism as well as historicism, with the aim of creating a building reserved for private, leisure, and technologically advanced purposes, and to simultaneously construct a building for funerary, religious, symbolic, and historical intentions (Babaie & Grigor, 2011).

In building the mausoleum, architects aimed to sanctify the memory of the buried person through the architectural language employed, whereas the location of the mausoleum in Rey directly connected it to the Shia religion. With its protruded facades, the building represented the quality of depth and three-dimensionality. Also, with a view to connecting with Iranian architectural history, the Chahar-Tagh prototype, as the basic form of Zoroastrian temples, was used in this structure. The Chahar-Tagh prototype consists of a dome sitting on a square room, which was the form used by Zoroastrians in their temple fires and later used by Achaemenids, Parthians, and Sasanians (Fig.1). To represent a king who had a wish for modernity, the architects used the International Style in colour and materials (Devos & Werner, 2014).

It served as a place for celebration and commemoration of the modernity of a nation, as well as a place for honouring the memory of Reza Shah and his deeds during his reign. It was a place where court ministers and state officials gathered annually to commemorate the Reza Shah's passing. Also, it served as a place for renewing the commitment to dynasty and a place for social occasions, such as Worker Days, when representatives of different guilds came together and declared their loyalty to the court. Along with Persepolis, for a long time it was a destination for foreign diplomats as well as foreign visitors (Devos & Werner, 2014).

On 12 May 1980 by the order of Sadegh Khalkhali, the head of the revolutionary court, the project of the destruction of the Mausoleum began (Fig. 2). Sadegh Khalkhali explained that the destruction of the place was an act of demolishing all signs of the Pahlavi dynasty: “All signs of tyranny (Pahlavi dynasty) should be removed, we should do it so as to his son know that there is no place for him in Iran” (Keyhan, 1980, p. 3).

Theoretical framework

> Tombstones dominate memorial scenes. Graveyards do double duty as a field of remembrance for the living and repositories of the dead, whose place of burial loses consequences as they molder into dust or are removed to make way for others. (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 533)

Memorial buildings (in this case a Mausoleum) serve as memory storage. In addition, they play a strong role in creating a cultural identity. This essay will consider the role of tombstones of important figures in Iran, specifically the mausoleum of Reza Shah, in creating a cultural identity. The theory used for this investigation is Jan Assmann’s (1995) theory of cultural memory. He believes that cultural memory, as one of the components of cultural identity, is passed on over time through cultural artifacts like memorial buildings. The cultural memory has its fixed point, which does not change with time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past, the memories of which are maintained through cultural formations like texts, rites, and monuments, and we call them memory figures (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). In his theory, he argues that cultural formations like memorial buildings stabilise cultural memory and make it accessible across millennia, and that this objectification and crystallisation of communicative and collectively-shared knowledge is a prerequisite for its transmission in the culturally-institutionalised heritage of a society. He believes that different societies derive their self-image from different sources; one derives it from holy books, one from ritual activities, and the other through the forms of an architectural language. He also argues that the reasons for remembering the past vary. One society remembers it so as to not be separated from its roots, while another might remember it out of a fear of repeating the past.

The other theory used in this paper is David Lowenthal’s (2015) theory on how we improve the past, as he described in his book *The Past is Foreign Country.* His theory could help us understand the ideological and motivational factors behind destroying memorial buildings as an approach to improve the past. According to Lowenthal, we hide or whitewash the past because it is distressing or distasteful (Lowenthal, 2015). One destroys the memorial building of one’s rival to immortalise oneself, to make people forget the rival’s name and remember one’s own name instead (Lowenthal, 2015). One believes that if one kills an illustrious man, that man’s glory will rebound to oneself (Lowenthal, 2015). We embellish the past by eradicating monuments that evoke some era’s glamor, or some person’s power. As relics, expunged memorials become the sole reminders of the past (Lowenthal, 2015).

The methodology used in this essay consisted of finding sufficient data that is relevant for defining memorial buildings and their function in creating a cultural identity, with a particular focus on Iran. In this regard, the essay firstly explores the general definition of cultural identity. To understand the reasons and motivations behind the destruction of memorial buildings, relevant literature defining the relation between memorial buildings and cultural identity will be investigated. This includes a review of archival material, such as newspapers published in the early days of the Islamic revolution, and relating this information to autobiographies and biographies of the actors concerned.

Pahlavi vs. Islamic Republic or nationalism vs. Islamism

Andrew Vincent, (2010) in his book *Modern Political Ideologies,* defined nationalism as:

> An ideology (or a form of behaviour) which makes national self-consciousness ethnic or linguistic identity into central plank of a doctrine which seeks political expression. (Vincent, 2010, p. 227)

With this definition, national government is the result of an interaction between ideologies of nationalism and statism, which on the one hand has a tendency to consolidate and stabilise the government, and on the other hand tries to create an identity-maker and a unifying situation in order to direct all cultural elements towards obeying one official dominant culture. Therefore, nationalism is a mental status, or a collective will that shows an individual's loyalty to the national government (Kohn, 1995).

Nationalists believe that there should be a sacred effort to retrieve a golden past that has been lost in an unfair way. They are hoping for a revival of the past's glorious civilisation by a future generation (Smith, 2004). Therefore, modern Iranian nationalism, which sought to establish a modern and powerful Iranian government, laid its foundation on Iranians' consciousness about their national identity, which has its root in the pre-Islamic era. The era was defined in the nineteenth century by European philologist in its extremist manner and relied on a pure Iranianism, which was inevitably in conflict with Islam as an alien religion and chose to either deny Islam or replace it with its ancient religion (Ashouri, 1998).

Iranianism resulted in the formation of anti-alienism, precisely an anti-Arabic culture and language attitude, in the Pahlavi government (Safaie, 1980). In the framework of national identity, each Iranian should identify with his fellow countrymen, while feeling a sense of alienation from others (Boshrieh, 2001).

During Reza Shah's reign, this sense of nationalism was emphasised, the pre-Islamic civilisation was honoured, Islam was considered as an invading religion, and Islamic values became devaluated. By sanctifying ancient traditions and purging the Persian language of Arabic words, nationalists tried to replace Islamism with nationalism (Shahram Nia & Nazifi, 2013).

Figure 1. *Front view of the Reza Shah Mausoleum in 1950 (Unknown, ca. 1951 / PD)*

Reza Shah's cultural reformation consisted of three main lines: archaism, modernism, and secularism. To reach the first objective, he tried to promote archaism by emphasising the uniqueness of the Aryan race, honouring the history of past monarchies, establishing the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, and restoring antique artifacts. In Reza Shah's opinion, religion was the biggest obstacle to the process of modernism. Therefore, he tried to diminish the role of religion in society through the humiliation of religious institutions, banning the hijab, and changing the educational system (Zariri, 2011).

To create a new national identity, Reza Shah tried to create a new homogeneous ideology to substitute for Islamic ideology, and to use it to unify all Iranians under a single political ideology, which resulted in the emergence of the new concept of nation. The elements for the creation of this new concept were the history and culture of ancient Iranians and the efforts to remove Shia from the Iranian identity (Zariri, 2011).

Upon the emergence of these new concepts of nation, nationalism, and national identity, there was a transformation in people's identities from objects to citizens. A new sense of patriotism also emerged that was defined by a loyalty to the nation that was devoid of religious sentiments (Ashraf, 2006).

This new idea of the nation created by people who had political, commercial, or cultural contacts with the West during the constitutional revolution period of Iran later transformed into a form of ethno-nationalism supported by the state during the Pahlavi dynasty (Ashraf, 2006).

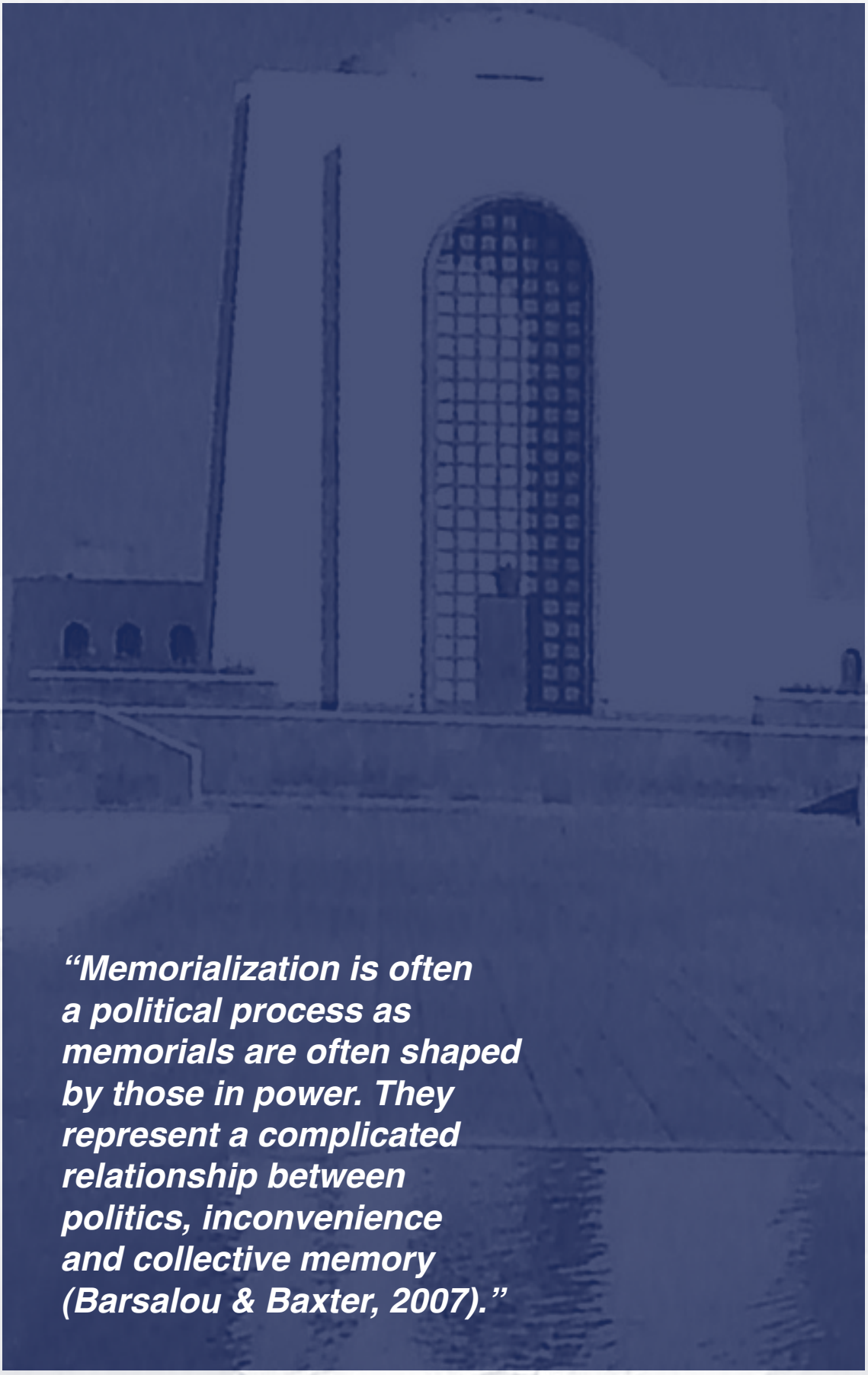
Reza Shah's efforts to impose Western culture on Iran resulted in anti-Western and anti-government trends emerging within the society. In *Iran: The Rise of a Regional Power*, Barry Rubin writes: in the introduction of Western culture in Iran the worst aspects of Western culture were represented, which was not tolerable for the religious and traditional society of Iran (Rubin, 2006). Moreover, Reza Shah's ideology of emphasising the imperial and pre-Islamic culture resulted in the identification of opposition, since the conflict between pre-Islamic culture and Shia beliefs was one of the reasons for the Islamic revolution in Iran (Enayat, 1992).

The conflict between Iranian identity and Islamic identity has existed since the Muslim Arabs conquered Iran in the seventh century AD. One of the acts of Muslim conquerors after conquering a country was to virtually erase their pre-Islamic history. Their purpose was not only a military conquest of the defeated nation but also to change their culture and identity. The ideology of Islam was to not only convert the defeated nations to Islam, but also to make them remember their pre-Islamic history as a time of darkness. To this end, one of the acts of Muslim invaders was to burn Iranian libraries containing books collected over centuries (Bassi, 2005).

Since the beginning of Islamic Republic, Shia religious ideology has been preferred over nationalism. Islam declares that it is a universal religion; hence it places the nation in a lower regard than itself. In Shia ideology, too, Islam has priority over the nation (Ahmadi Zadeh, 2015).

The ideology of the Islamic revolution to a large extent led to the denial of values cherished by previous regimes and of other points of view, and it sought to establish a new system based solely on Islamic values and principles (Beheshti & Saberi, 2014).

To this end, Iranian identity was redefined by three renowned religious figures: Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari, Ali Shariati, and Mehdi Bazargan. For Motahhari, an identity would be acceptable that was compatible with Iranian-Islamic national identity and that helped with cooperation and unifying Muslims in a moderate and peaceful way (Motahhari, n.d.). In Shariati's views, nation and nationality are related to culture, and therefore are inseparable from religion (Shariati, 2013). Bazargan did not see Iranian nationalism and Islam as separate, and he believed that separating these two elements would lead to the destruction of society (Bazargan, 1985).



(Unknown, ca. 1951 / PD)

"Memorialization is often a political process as memorials are often shaped by those in power. They represent a complicated relationship between politics, inconvenience and collective memory (Barsalou & Baxter, 2007)."

Another person who redefined Iranian identity was Ayatollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic. He believed in two main features of the Iranian nation: Iranism (nationalism) and Islamism, though the latter had priority for him. He respected nationalism as long as it did not contradict Islamism (Shahram Nia & Nazifi, 2013).

Islamic identity was a reaction to various aspects of modernism, including nationalism. The European concept of nation and nationalism did not exist in Iranian culture, and since it conceived of itself as preceding Islam, it found itself in conflict with Islamic culture. The desire to export the tenets of the Islamic revolution demonstrated the belief that that Islamic identity was a transnational identity, and it was in conflict with nationalism, and thus within this concept Islamic identity has priority over national identity (Pour Ahmadi, 2007).

Destruction of Reza Shah's mausoleum: revival of the tradition of breaking tombstones in Iran

Mausoleums are monuments or buildings with the function of memorialising a nation's dead heroes. These sites convey strong political ideas and serve as part of the celebration of nationhood. As burial places for renowned figures, they are of political significance. The reasons for visiting them are mostly connected to pilgrimage or sightseeing rather than grieving. These sites achieve a degree of permanence, as they have the quality of sanctity (Rugg, 2000).

Reza Shah's mausoleum was an important and respectful place for the Pahlavi dynasty and its supporters and was used on various occasions for specific ceremonies. At the time of its existence, there was also a provision for placing flowers on the Mausoleum on various occasions (Kavoshi, n.d.).

In his diary, Sadegh Khalkhali explained the reason for destroying the Mausoleum:

> By destroying the Mausoleum we wanted the former king of Iran and his supporters to know that they do not have any root and place in Iran, thereby disappointing his supporters in Iran. Moreover, it served for the consolation of Pahlavi dynasty and its supporters. Apart from the fact that the location of the Mausoleum was a kind of disrespect to Abdol-Azim holy shrine as it had blocked the view of the shrine, but also destroying the Mausoleum made Muslims happy. There was still the possibility that over time the Mausoleum eventually became a holy place and a place of pilgrimage (Khalkhali, 2000, p. 350).

Khalkhali stated that in destroying the Mausoleum, the intention was to remove all signs of the previous regime. He further stated that since they had already changed the national flag and national currency, it was now time for removing the Mausoleum (Ettela'at, 1980).

The tradition of insulting the dead by destroying their tombstones has not been limited to after the establishment of the Islamic Republic. One of the most famous cases happened in the eighteenth century when Agha Mohammad khan Ghajar, the founder of the *Ghajar* dynasty, ordered that the bones of Karim Khan Zand be dug up from his tomb and buried in his castle's doorway so that he could step on them whenever he entered the castle (Noghreh Kar, 2013). Another example is the 1955 destruction of the clergy's fatwa cemeteries of Baha'is, which was undertaken by Muslims (Nikoo Sefat, 2009).

By destroying Reza Shah's mausoleum, Sadegh Khalkhali revived the Muslim tradition of destroying all cultural and ideological signs of conquered nations that was discussed earlier in this chapter. This then became a pattern of behaviour for Islamists. The issue is not just limited to destroying graves and gravesites, but also to banning the exercise of any ceremony for loss. Naturally, with the absence of tombstones, it is easier to prevent any rituals of memorialisation for the deceased (Mohammadi, 2016).

To illustrate how the destruction of gravesites and tombstones has been strategically employed in Iran, not only for political figures such as past rulers, but also for other prominent members of society, one has to look at the case of Imamzadeh Taher cemetery.

The cemetery, which is located near Karaj city, is a place where a huge number of tombstones have been vandalised. The cemetery has become very famous due to the many renowned artists and cultural figures that have been buried there, and it has also become a meeting point for political opponents. On various occasions, people gather at the cemetery and carry out different ceremonies. Lecturing, poem readings, and disseminating leaflets are the main practices at these famous gravesites. It is therefore not surprising that this cemetery turned into a place of troublemaking in the eyes of the government (Bakhtiari, 2005).

Ahmad Shamlou, an Iranian poet, is one of the famous people buried in this cemetery whose tombstone has been broken four times so far. Ali Salehi (2006), a member of the poets Association of Iran, in response to a question about the reasons for destroying Shamlou's tombstone said:

> The actors believed that by destroying the tombstones they would be able to impose their ideology. In other words, they would be able to scare his sympathisers. They wanted no sign reminding people of a liberal person in Iran. His tombstone is a meeting point for his like-minded, where every Thursday people come together and memorialize him by reading his poems. By destroying the tombstones, the opponents imply that this could also happen to other liberal people and there is no place for them in Iran. (Salehi, 2006)

Sohrab Sepehri is another poet whose tombstone has suffered vandalism. In this case, it seems that there is one main issue that makes his grave problematic: it is the meeting

Figure 2. *Destruction of Reza Shah's tomb with a crane (Khalkhali, 1980/PD)*

point for his fans on his death anniversary and birthday and is a religious place. The authorities thus think it is problematic and they propose to change the location of his grave (Donya-e-Eghtesad, 2016).

Fereydoon Froughi, a famous musician, is another person whose tombstone has been broken twice so far. His tombstone, which has a picture of a broken guitar carved on it, was broken by people who wanted to prevent the gathering of his fans, who use drugs when coming together. This event was followed by preventing his family from holding a mourning ceremony on the anniversary of his death (Bakhtiari, 2005).

In some cases, the tombstones of dead opponents of the 2008 election in Iran were broken. It is said that the reason for destroying the tombstones was that they referred to the deceased as martyrs. The relatives of the deceased always take these acts as acts of disrespect to the deceased and to themselves. The relatives are not yet allowed to mourn their loss in public and in a polite manner (Doostar, 2016).

These are just a few case studies to illustrate this phenomenon, but there have been numerous such cases reported by media outlets that include Tabnak, Deutsche Welle, BBC, VOA, etc. These cases include destroying numerous tombstones of people from various backgrounds, such as: Ali Sepanlou (Poet), Naser Hejazi (Athlete), Abbas Kiarostami (Film director), and Khavaran cemetery (the burial place of political opponents). All people whose tombstones have been broken have three points in common: 1) Their thoughts, ideas, and lifestyles were incompatible with the values of the Islamic government. 2) They appealed to a specific society that is not acceptable to the government.

3) During their lives, they were suppressed by the government through different means, such as not being granted permits to publish their works and being subject to censorship, arrest, and threats (Mohammadi, 2016).

Discussion

In order to have a collective identity, any social group needs to share a common interpretation of events and experiences that have shaped the group over time. It may include agreements about the origin of the group. In the case of a nation-state, this could include distinct points and symbolic moments that have created the self-image of a group (Tosh, 1991).

In his book *The Spirit of Prague*, Czech novelist Ivan Klima told us:

> We will lose ourselves if we lose our diary and memories, forgetfulness is one of the signs of death, and without memories and diaries we are not any longer humans. (Klima, 1994, p. 37)

Memory is essential for creating a sense of self, identity, culture, and heritage. It contributes to the creation of culture and tradition and repressing other cultures through blending and embellishing memories (Lowenthal, 1985). All memories are inevitably connected to specific places. Hence, sites of cultural heritage such as mausoleums provoke our memories and encourage our connection to certain times and places (McDowell, 2008). Identities and monuments are selective, as they always serve particular interests and ideologies (Gillis, 1994). Individuals and groups always choose certain memories to fulfill their needs of identity. People look to the past to reinterpret new events and ideas in the present as time changes. They look for specific patterns and orders in the past to support constantly-changing social, economic, and cultural values (Foote, 2003).

Memorialisation is often a political process, as memorials are often shaped by those in power. They represent a complicated relationship between politics, inconvenience, and collective memory (Barsalou & Baxter, 2007). The concept of power is a prerequisite for the establishment of heritage and identity; in other words, heritage is made rather than given. Those who hold the power decide about what is remembered and what is forgotten (David, 2001).

Monumental icons of identity, such as monuments, memorials, and buildings, contain and convey a certain message by transforming political messages into a public, visual presence (Whelan, 2003). Memorials serve as a reminder of the past. By selecting a specific narrative of an event and highlighting it, these political works of art make a certain version of history eternal in public consciousness (Cho, 2016). The government represents the mainstream values through memorials to feed the concept of national identity and create a framework for national ideas and history (McDowell, 2008).

> Monuments are more than aesthetic objects. In their deepest essence, they are about memories, memories that constitute the very marrow of a city's identity, bestowing personality and character upon the city just as they do upon the individual. The form, shape, size, and way of making of a monument, the story of how it came to be there, the trials and tribulation of those who made it, the manner of its placement in its city, all of these contribute to crystallizing the workings of memory. For these purposes, it does not matter whether those memories are good or bad. But it does matter how they relate to their city, and which monuments survive to represent them. (Al-Khalil, 1991)

Referring back to the earlier section titled *Pahlavi vs. Islamic Republic or nationalism vs. Islamism*, during Reza Shah's reign, nationalism was honoured, and the elements used to bolster this nationalism were the history and culture of ancient Iran. Therefore, Islam was considered an invading religion during this time, while after the Islamic revolution, Shia religious ideology was preferred over nationalism.

Milan Kundera, in his book *Laughter and Forgetting*, quoted Milan Hübl:

> The first step in liquidating of a people, said Hübl, is to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history. Then have somebody write new books, manufacture a new culture, invent a new history. Before long the nation will begin to forget what it is and what it was. The world around it will forget even faster (Kundera, 1994).

Physical destruction of a community's cultural materials can be conceived as a first step in destroying its past and making it vulnerable to attacks (Varatharajah, 2013). As Robert Bevan says:

> The link between erasing any physical reminder of a people and its collective memory and the killing of people themselves is ineluctable. (Bevan, 2016, p. 8)

This is the main purpose of the Islamic regime's propaganda since its establishment: to create a fake history through the destruction of cultural monuments contributing to the creation of collective memory and broadcasting it through official media and educational curriculum (Kazemian, 2017).

> There is a dominant ideology that says any sign of unconformity with the governmental Islam should be demolished. One of these signs is the tombstone. Another reason is to impose the governmental historical narration by distorting the collective memories. (Sarkoohi, 2016)

Cemeteries are not just places for burial, but they also act as a kind of mnemonic device to help the living remember those who have passed (Fisher, n.d.). The cemetery is a place of conflict between two groups: that which tries to preserve the memory of its loss, and that which strives to erase all traces of nonconformity (Amanat, 2012). The

tombstones investigated in this paper are meeting points where people come together and memorialise deceased persons. The same was true for Reza Shah's mausoleum.

The Islamic regime is a totalitarian regime. It wants a public space with signs compatible with its values. Therefore, when it is not able to demolish unacceptable signs, it anonymously destroys them (Mohammadi, 2016).

In most of the cultures and religions of the world, the dead body of a human is respected and sacred. The burial ceremony is one of the most obvious aspects of each religion's respect towards the dead. The burial ceremonies, on one hand, show the respect for a body that used to be the home of the soul. On the other hand, they show the respect towards the people who loved the deceased. The dead body reminds those who remain of feelings, emotions, and memories that they shared with the deceased (Doostar, 2016).

It seems that this is the main reason for the destruction of Reza Shah's mausoleum, as Khalkhali mentioned in his diaries the role the mausoleum was playing for the consolation of the Pahlavi dynasty and its supporters.

The tendency to insult and violate corpses may be a reflection of a suppressed compulsion that has persisted in Iran's collective memory. Cemeteries as middle spaces between a living society and its dead can be an ideal place for attacking or insulting different religious ideologies (Amanat, 2012).

Conclusion

By examining the above-mentioned instances and theories, it can be seen that the contradictions of different ideologies have a significant role in these acts of destruction. Regarding the destruction of the Reza Shah's grave, it can be seen that the ideology of the Islamic Republic, which is Islamist ideology, is in conflict with the nationalist ideology of the Pahlavi dynasty. Reza Shah's aim was to create a new identity based on nationalism, and as mentioned before, memory is essential for creating a sense of self, identity, culture, and heritage. Moreover, all memories are inevitably connected to specific places. The rival ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to eliminate the appearances and remains that are in the form of a statement of the previous ideology, including the graves of individuals.

On the other hand, the role that graves play in creating respect for the deceased and relieving the grief of their remaining relatives is worth discussion. As mentioned earlier, Khalkhali described one of the reasons for the destruction as removing the role of the tomb in the relief of Pahlavi's family and supporters. Or, in regard to those who were killed in the 2008 protests, their relatives considered the destruction of the graves as an act of disrespect towards the deceased.

Considering the reasons and motivations for destroying dissenters' tombstones in Iran, it is probable that these actions are meant to: 1) humiliate relatives and supporters; 2) scare those who remain; 3) scare dissenters and send a message that we do not have mercy even for your loss; 4) erase all signs that remind the remaining and like-minded people of the deceased person; 5) prevent families and supporters from coming together (Noghreh Kar, 2013).

Another point that can be considered in terms of the destruction of graves is the Islamic Republic's attempt to make a fake history by destroying the effective cultural monuments that contribute to the collective memory and by disseminating this fabricated history through its own media.

Today, the only thing remaining of Reza Shah's mausoleum is an empty space and an unclear memory of a white structure. The road leading to the mausoleum is still called *The Road of Mausoleum*, but nobody knows whose mausoleum this name refers to, and perhaps this is the reason why the name of this road has not been changed by the regime. Without architectural narration of history, people are not able to remember their national identity and collective memory. Reza Shah, whether he was a bad or a good person, is a part of Iran's modern national history.

The Islamic regime is the enemy of Iranian culture, a culture that should be passed from generation to generation, and one that consists of Iranian art, history, and tradition. The Islamic regime is trying to replace the Iranian culture with a fake Islamic- Arabic culture by interrupting and destroying it (Bahari, 2017). Although Islam finally became the dominant culture, Iranian people still seek their roots from their Zoroastrian past. The tension still remains today, for example, although there were many Iranian festivals condemned and banned by the Islamic regime as pagan rituals, they are still celebrated by Iranians. The memory of glorious Persia never left the Persian collective psyche since there are still ruins of places such as Persepolis (Khalkhali also tried to destroy Persepolis), which remind the people of their great history before Islam. The evidence is undeniable for the Islamic regime, as it is carved in stone (Bassi, 2005).

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Figures

Figure 1 & p.51: Unknown [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons < https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8e/RezaShahBozorgTombRay.jpg >

Figure 2: By Sadegh Khalkhali [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Reza-Shah%27s_mausoleum_demolishing.jpg>

Figure p.44 : Unknown [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons <https://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D9%BE%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87:Aramgah_Reza_Shah_Mausoleum.jpg>

Arpitha Shreedhara

Nation-Building Strategies and Heritage

The impact of political and religious ideologies in the destruction of the Ramjanmabhoomi/Babri Masjid in Ayodhya

Introduction

India is a large and extremely diverse nation that constantly has to face the challenge of maintaining unity. With such extreme diversity came ideologies, both inherited and imposed. The cultural and ideological struggles in this mighty state have been expressed through various socio-cultural movements. Today, the government of India claims to be a state with territorial unity, stable democracy, and religious impartiality. However, it is still a nation with various political parties and contrasting views from these parties. Heritage has always been a topic of conversation and a major victim of such conflicting political views. Although religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity co-exist all over India, the conflict has never ceased. For the last two decades, The Hindu National Movement has been an influential factor in creating communal tension in parts of India. The current political movement, which has leveraged heritage to create such tension, has both short-term and long-term goals. One such major long-term goal was/is to establish a homogeneous Hindu State and gain a sense of supremacy as a religious community. The case study of Ramjanabhoomi / Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is an interesting one with layers of complexities involved. According to mythology, Ayodhya was home to one of the major Hindu kingdoms and the birthplace of Hindu Lord Rama. However, it was conquered by Mughals, which led to the construction of mausoleums and other Islamic religious structures at the site. The construction of mausoleums over Hindu religious structures fuelled a huge conflict. The dispute, which began in 1853, is

still going on in one way or another. The major concern of this paper is to take a look at the situation and discuss the significance of the site from the point of view of both local Hindu and Muslim communities, and to understand what people expect the site to be. This paper is not a solution, but more of an analysis to understand how political and religious ideologies can affect a historically-charged site like Ayodhya and how *difficult heritage* can be managed.

The paper addresses the important issue of Hindu-Muslim rivalry in India, which is still the reason for many losses, both tangible and intangible. Today, it is a major threat for not just heritage, but also for India as a nation in general. The main aim of the paper will be to explore the case study of Ramjanmabhoomi/ Babri Masjid – Ayodhya as an example to analyse the broader topic of the political impact on heritage.

The paper will mainly draw its theoretical framework from Ernest Renan's (1992) text *What is a Nation?* and Pradip K Datta's (1996) article *Reincarnation through Ideologies and Organisation*. Other basic information about the site comes from local state tourism websites and the works of local authors. Due to the site being a source of communal tension, not a lot of official data is available. However, plenty of data is available from sources that include online journals, newspaper articles, thesis papers, social media platforms, newspaper interviews, etc., and this data has been combined with the author's own knowledge about the site.

The paper is divided into six different sections. The first section will bring to light the general ideological theories that exist in India. This section is the base for understanding the setting and the political scenario in India, which plays a huge role in defining heritage. This part of the paper will also explore the relations between heritage and religion in the pre- and post-colonial contexts, and will mention events that affected heritage before and after the attainment of Independence in 1947. It also briefly explains the current ideology of modern India. The second and third sections will provide the actual site details for the Ramjanmabhoomi/Babri Masjid, including the evolution, etymology, construction, and destruction of heritage, its architectural features, the significance of Ayodhya and Babri Masjid, conflict at the site, political interventions, current practices at the site, and recent archaeological explorations. The fourth section will explain the present scenario through a timeline of events. As the case is extremely complicated and has a long history, a simpler summary of this timeline is presented in this section. The section will draw its matter from the political and religious ideologies of different communities, which have led to the strategic deconstruction and deployment of cultural meanings pertaining to the site. The fifth section will present views of both Hindu and Muslim communities about the site, discuss how the religious conflict led to the brutal act of destruction of the Masjid, and describe the immediate aftermath. The section will serve as the link between the history, the present scenario, and the future of the site. The section will be comprised of actual interviews with local residents presenting different

local perspectives on the site. The sixth and the last section will be the conclusive part of the paper, which identifies how the treatment of heritage is being dominated by ideologies. The section will refer to writings from international and national authors in order to analyse the matter.

The overall goal of the paper is to understand and analyse the impact of sociocultural beliefs on heritage, with the ideological transformation of India and the example of the destruction of the Babri Masjid forming the subject matter.

Historical and cultural background

India is a country with rich cultural, natural, social, political, and religious heritage. Religious beliefs, practices, and political ideologies have a great influence on public life in India. To understand the status of India today, it is important to study these past ideologies. Whether it is positive or negative, in the case of India, the rich artistic heritage owes a lot to religious symbolism and thoughts. Although studies and past findings state that prior to modern India, Hinduism held a majority, the colonial era made the country more ethnically diverse. The civilisation of India, which is believed to be 5000 years old, has been enhanced by migrations. Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism, in particular, are homegrown religious identities. Islam and Christianity, although present earlier, majorly expanded during the British colonial period (Patnaik & Mudiam, 2014). The cultural past of each of these religions has affected the art, architecture, and heritage.

Today, in a post-colonial setting, the preamble of the Government of India's Constitution states that:

> *WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, and DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens (…). (*Indiacode.nic.in*, 2017)*

Although India claims to be a secular country, there has always been tension between the Hindu and Muslim communities. In this respect, it is a common misconception that most of the nationalist theories of India are indivisible and successful in fostering unity (Taylor and Francis, 2013). In fact, it seems that the extreme diversity has proved to be overpowering when it comes to believing in the idea of a united India.

Rabindranath Tagore describes the greatest problem of India as:

> *(…) the problem of the world in miniature. India is too vast in its area and too diverse in its races. It is many countries packed in one geographical receptacle (…) India (…) being naturally many, yet adventitiously one has all along suffered from the looseness of its diversity and the feebleness of its unity. A true unity is like a round globe; it rolls on, carrying its burden easily. However, diversity is a many-cornered thing, which has to be dragged and pushed with full force. (Tagore, 2003,p.30)*

As said earlier, religion is an integral part of daily life, affecting even factors as simple as food habits, sleeping schedules, etc. In the publication *Religion as a Cultural System*, Clifford Geertz describes religion as a system of symbols that has influence in establishing powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations (Geertz, 1996). Geertz also states that religion affects the formulation of conceptions of a general order of existence, and lends these conceptions an aura of factuality (Geertz, 1966, p. 5). In the scenario of India, religion defines aspects such as education, business, and politics. In fact, one can say that a huge part of political ideologies are formed based on religious beliefs. For example, political support is greatly based on the religion with which the party sympathises. Indian politicians often make use of these religious sentiments, especially during election campaigns, for their political and personal gains (Gazette, 2017).

The case of the Babri Masjid is similar. It held symbolism for the Mughal Empire until Hindu nationalists, with the support of a major Hindu political party, destroyed it in 1992 in order to gain supremacy over other parties with different religious beliefs. Although there are layers of dispute as to whether this particular site was only a mosque built by the Muslim Emperor Babur or if it was first the birthplace of the mythological Hindu hero Lord Rama, the destruction was carried out mostly for political gain. However, up until today, neither of the concerned communities have seen closure or gained anything from this situation (Patnaik and Mudiam, 2014).

Thus, politics is not just an influencing factor on the people of India; it is also a major driving force behind the formation of nation-building strategies that use religion as a tool. The impact of this in the name of nation-building is directly harmful to heritage (Datta, 1991).

Site Description

Ayodhya is located in Uttar Pradesh, a state in northern India. It is an ancient city that is significant among Hindus, and it is mentioned in one of the greatest mythological Hindu texts, *The Ramayana*, as the birthplace of Lord Rama (Anon, 2017). Elements of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Islam are still evident in the city. It is also referred to as *Saketa*, meaning heaven where God resides (Cunningham, 2005, p. 405). The religious text of *Atharvaveda* describes Ayodhya as a mythical city of gods with eight circles and nine entrances (Dutta et al., 1996).

An additional, literal meaning of the word *Ayodhya* is *to fight, or to wage war*, which coincidentally also describes today's situation at the site quite well. Ayodhya is known as an important place of socio-cultural exchange and has been of political significance for centuries. Verses that indicate the previous presence of a Hindu empire have also been found (Cunningham, 2005), and the place is considered to be one of the seven

holy pilgrimage places for Hindus to visit. Texts state that it served as the capital for various Hindu dynasties, such as the Gupta Empire, Maurya Empire, and Shunga Empire. Hence, Ayodhya is thus politically and religiously important for Hindus all over India (Dutta et al., 1996).

Babri Masjid, the disputed site, is a mosque located in Ayodhya. It is spread over an area of 2.77 acres/ 1.22 ha and is currently owned by the government of India. The site is not open to the public and can only be used with permission from the state government. According to an inscription, the mosque was built on the order of Mughal emperor Babur in 1528-29 CE (Dutta et al., 1996). The matter of the controversy is based on the widely-spread assumption that the mosque was built on the land of a Hindu temple (Cunningham, 2005). Around 1526 AD, parts of India fell to the Mughal dynasty, which marked the beginning of a major religious battle between Muslims and Hindus who were both trying to overpower each other (Datta, 1991). However, at this particular site, the actual political, historical, and socio-cultural debate between Hindus and Muslims, which is widely known as the *Ayodhya dispute*, began long after the construction of a mosque (Datta, 1991).

The evidence supporting the different narratives at the site of Ramjanmabhoomi/ Babri Masjid is questionable from both points of view. Findings are contradictory and often weak. Most of the historic texts belonging to the Hindu and Islamic religions offer contradictory facts and support respective, opposing narratives. The matter of an earlier Hindu temple having ever existed at the place is therefore highly disputed, as different texts suggest different things (Datta, 1991; Ganguly, 2003; Elst, 1990). Meanwhile, the ASI reports complicate the situation further by not providing topographical features and by totally ignoring the details related to the construction of the mosque. The ASI reports solely argue the presence of the temple by the shape and material of pillar bases found during excavation (Sushil – the Hindu, 2003).

Art-culture-architecture

The city of Ayodhya contains many religious structures along the river Sarayu. The place is significant, especially to Hindu communities, as it is an important pilgrimage site for them (Ganguly, 2003). The major Hindu festival of *Diwali*, New Year for some Hindus in India, is traced back to Ayodhya: as the city glittered in light with the return of Lord Rama to his birthplace and the festival was established (Ranjan et al., 2017). The place also contains many smaller temples built on the riverbank of the Sarayu, old palaces, and Islamic structures, such as mausoleums and Mughal gardens, amongst others (Ganguly, 2003).

The architecture of the Babri Masjid that once stood in Ayodhya is only partially documented. According to texts, the masjid followed a typical Mughal style, specifically

known as later *Tughlaq* style, named after Mughal ruler Tughlaq (Ranjan et al., 2017). The Mosque looked like a replica of some mosques found around other parts of northern India, with little alterations to match the weather conditions. The architectural style particularly followed the school of *Jaunpur Sultanate*, which was a kingdom in northern India that believed in great respect for art and architecture (Ganguly, 2003). Architect Graham Pickford, in his book *Historic Structures of Oudhe*, has described the special acoustic and cooling system of the mosque. He states that a high ceiling and six large grill windows kept the interior cool by allowing natural light and air in (Shankar, 2011).

Ayodhya is an eclectic mix when it comes to culture. The predominant religion is Hinduism, with Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam, and Jainism still existing (Ranjan et al., 2017). The skyline of Ayodhya is a clear mirror of the evolution of city, with invasions from different communities having left their traces in terms of religious architecture.

At present, the site under controversy is more or less a barren land, with the ruins of the mosque serving both communities as a place for prayer (so long as permission is granted).

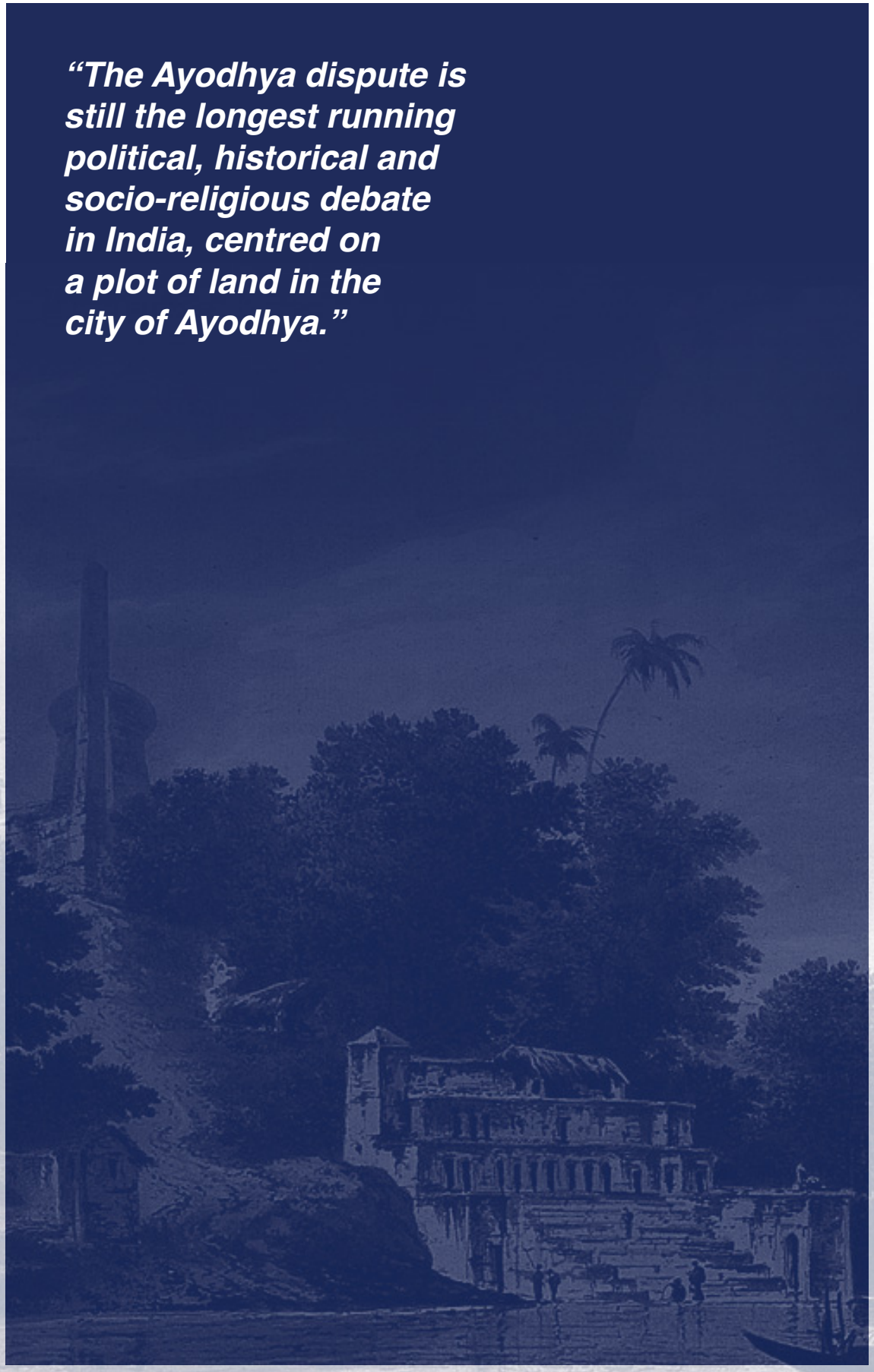
Timeline of controversy

The Babri Masjid dispute, or Ayodhya dispute, already began in 1528 and has been going on until today. For the sake of clarity, the events can be presented in the following timeline of events:

> 1528: Mosque constructed --- 1853: First dispute --- 1859: Site divided by fence --- 1885: First case filed --- 1949: Encroachment by Hindus --- 1984: Hindu group VHP (Viśva Hindū Pariṣada), formed ---1986: Babri Masjid Committee formed --- 1990: VHP(Viśva Hindū Pariṣada), a Hindu nationalist group tries to destroy mosque --- 1992: Babri Masjid brought down, Riots, 2000 deaths --- 2001: 10th anniversary of destructions, Tensions reoccur --- 2002: Attack on Hindu group, around 1000 deaths, ASI excavations ordered --- 2003: Temple traces found by ASI --- 2004: Case re-opens --- 2010: Court verdict – case continues

As we can see on the timeline above, the mosque remained under dispute for several years before its actual destruction. Up to 1880, numerous attempts were made to take down the mosque, but none of them were successful. Post-independence in 1942, India was divided into India and Pakistan and a democratic system was introduced. The Hindu political party, which was now the face of independent India, had political control at this time. In 1964, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), a Hindu nationalist group, was formed with the intention to gain supreme power over Christianity and Islam and to make India a Hindu nation. With emerging political power, VHP gained new support for their endeavour to achieve religious leadership of the society. L.K. Advani, the leader of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), the major Hindu political party,

“The Ayodhya dispute is still the longest running political, historical and socio-religious debate in India, centred on a plot of land in the city of Ayodhya.”



(Wellcome Library, London by Hodges, 1785 , / CC BY 4.0)

publically announced the so-called *Ratha Yatra*, a campaign aimed at making Ayodhya a purely Hindu region in order to gain broader religious and political support (Datta, 1991). As justification for *Ratha Yatra,* the BJP claimed that:

> If Muslims are entitled to an Islamic atmosphere in Mecca, and if Christians are entitled to a Christian atmosphere in the Vatican, why is it wrong for the Hindus to expect a Hindu atmosphere in Ayodhya? (Ganguly, 2003, p.366).

With that, a group of activists called *Kar sevaks* were trained. Finally, on 6 December 1992, these activists, backed by politicians, entered the Islamic site of Babri Masjid and destroyed it (Indiatoday.intoday.in, 2017). What followed were riots across the country, leading to the death of around 2000 people (Ganguly, 2003). Neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan joined the riots by destroying Hindu temples and houses on their territories.

The *Ayodhya dispute* is still the longest running political, historical, and socio-religious debate in India. The dispute did not end with the destruction of the mosque. The after effects were even bigger than the actual controversy. Even today, terrorist attacks in India are linked to this event. Muslim organisations also have openly expressed outrage against Hindus in this matter (Patnaik & Mudiam, 2014). The saddest part is the actual aftermath of the destruction and the recent improvements. *The Wall Street Journal* states:

> On a political level, the demolition of the structure, variously called the Babri Masjid and the Ram birthplace temple, was a culmination of a sustained religious campaign by Hindu activists including many from the Bharatiya Janata Party that now rules India. The party had just two seats in the Parliament in 1989 when its national executive endorsed the demand to build a Ram temple at the site. After the endorsement, the BJP saw its seats in Parliament jump to 85, turning it into a major political force within Indian politics. (WSJ Staff, 2014)

The more sensible approach of the ASI excavation did not provide much of a solution either. As explained earlier, ASI reports came out with many confusing and misleading facts that worsened the situation. Furthermore, the matter spun out of control due to the involvement of major political forces, especially the BJP, backed by the VHP, pushing to establish the temple at any cost. The excavations conducted in 2002 and 2003 have revealed the presence of a temple-like structure, giving more ground to those in favour of the Hindu temple (Patnaik & Mudiam, 2014). There have been findings of a stone pillar base, steps, and other inscriptions in stone relating to the temple. The matter is highly confidential and believed to be influenced by some people. Finally, the court order based on this report from 2010 has not been a useful contribution to solving the conflict either. The verdict on the case of the Babri Masjid stated on 30 September 2010 that the property should be divided between the Hindu and Muslim communities

so that they have 1/7 and 1/3 of the area, respectively, but both parties rejected this compromise. The communal feud continues to date (Anon, 2017).

Communal views

The Ayodhya dispute is also extensively discussed on social media and in the news, which shows that the cultural significance of the site for today's society is at least partly connected to its contention value, with each party trying to use the site to legitimise its own superiority. This is particularly reflected in the comments on social media, which are often filled with extreme hatred towards the other group and a strong belief that either the temple has to prevail or the mosque.

In online news, Hindu leaders still say that:

> It would be better that the Muslims leave their claim as it will benefit both the communities. This will also strengthen the unity of the country and end the bitterness between us. (Rai, 2017)

However, more sensible views have also been expressed with regard to this issue. For example, a local resident named Zafar Ahmad stated in an interview that:

> As a Muslim, I may not question this judgment. But as an Indian, I do because ultimately this issue is about Constitutional guarantees, about the preamble, about how modern India views itself. What precedents are we setting at a time we are projecting ourselves as an emerging superpower moving into the era of science, technology and reason? Are we now going to start digging underneath each time an issue of faith is raised?. (Subramaniyam, 2017)

Another view by a local is stated as such:

> The Moguls may have razed temples, but that was the character of those times. Kings put a stamp on their conquests by razing anything that was 'foreign'. It's quite stupid to justify fundamentalism of any sort today because of historical happenings. And it would be even more stupid to fritter away time in involving ourselves in such disputes rather than concentrating on building ourselves, our country. Is it a good idea to kill people to make a place for prayer? We as a nation should stay as far as possible from the likes of Mulayam Singh or Kalyan Singh. Let's stop bringing religion into everything. (Français & Avadhani, 2017)

Mohammed Sharif, a local resident of the area, expresses his grief by stating:

> Yes. But I want to mention that Muslims and Hindus have lived amicably in this region. No tension. We eat and live together. Even during the 1992 demolition of the mosque, we refrained from violence with our Hindu brothers. It is the people outside, the politicians and power brokers who create tension. To get votes. To make money. (Français and Avadhani, 2017)

Even the former prime minister of India, Manmohan Singh, expressed the need to close the issue by stating:

> Communal harmony needs to be strengthened. If we are divided in the name of religion, the country is in danger. To strengthen development, we have to create an environment of peace. (Français & Avadhani, 2017)

Conclusion

As we study the importance of the site for each community, the solution to a dispute like this becomes more and more complicated. Ernest Renan, in his text, *What is Nation?* says:

> A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things which, properly speaking, are really one and the same, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is the past, the other is the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present consent, the desire to live together, the desire to continue to invest in the heritage that we have jointly received. (Renan, 1992, p.10)

Religion, the biggest strategic tool for nation-building, is supposed to bring people together with its views, not the other way around. Religion, as mentioned by Geertz (1966, p.05), creates meaning for life and makes pain endurable. Religion and symbolism is created to send us back to everyday life and convince us that our worldview and way of life are indeed true, good, and ultimately fulfilling. However, in this case, a piece of land, which is supposed to be cherished and which is supposed to maintain the balance amongst people, has torn a nation apart.

In many cases, managing heritage is only meaningful when the approach is fair to all groups of people. For example, Indonesia, a predominantly Islamic nation, has promoted the Buddhist site of Borobudur as a part of its Islam-Buddhist bonding and cultural history. The Taj Mahal in India, which is a mausoleum built by a Muslim ruler, has survived under pressure, despite it being surrounded by Hindu communities, because of its economic benefits in terms of tourism (Chapagain and Silva, 2017, p. 9). A religious solution to a controversy like this has absolutely no end. Considering such circumstances, the idea of converting a site as controversial as this into a neutral, functional space that could benefit both conflicting parties seems like a viable option. One may think of a hospital or an office space or other secular spaces.

The situation of the *Ayodhya dispute*, which I have actually grown up hearing about, makes me question the presence of humanity altogether. My observation with respect to this dispute is very close to home. However, I still fail to understand how in a country with a population of around 1.3 billion there is no initiation towards a peaceful

settlement. In my opinion, the idea that politics and religion can be used as a way to develop a nation does not seem to be true. In slight opposition to Renan, I would rather agree with the idea that a nation is built based on atrocities that take place in the name of religion and politics. Neither archaeologists, nor conservators, nor architects have any power over the situation—no matter what their findings and abilities are—if politics do not follow a rational and secular line.

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Figures

Figure p.63: By Bhatnagar [CC-BY-SA-3.0] via Wikimedia Commons
< https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f7/Ayodhya_city.jpg >

Figure p.69: Courtsy of Wellcome Library, London. by William Hodges, 1785 [CC-BY-4.0] via Welcome Library < http://catalogue.wellcomelibrary.org/record=b1184647 >

Transformation

(Ziko 2016 / CC BY-SA 3.0)

Eva Maas

The Palace of the Republic

When destruction creates myths

Introduction

> It will be hard to forget me, now that I am no longer there.
> My presence in absence will echo.
> A colossus of concrete, history, and time doesn't leave
> Without leaving something disappearing
> When everything is long over (Falkner, 2010, p.77).

This part of the poem *The Last Day of the Republic* by Gerhard Falkner (2010), which he wrote in response to the destruction of the Palace of the Republic, the former meeting place of the German Democratic Republic's people's chamber, highlights the lingering effects of a building that was as significant for the state, its people, and its history as the Palace of the Republic, even after having been torn down. The building, which was created as a representation of the state's government and power and as a place of culture for the country's people, played a major role not only in times of the GDR's existence, but crucially also after the end of the state. Within the process of the reunification of the divided Germany and long afterwards, its existence fuelled emotional debates about whether to tear it down or to reuse it with a different purpose. There was probably no other building in Berlin that became as loaded with different meanings as the Palace of the Republic, and arguments came from various directions: whether East Germans, West Germans, politicians, historians, or young artists from the new experimental side of Berlin, everyone claimed to have a stake and tried to enforce their idea for the *Schlossplatz* in Berlin's centre.

Figure 1. *The Berlin Palace of the Republic. (Junge 1986,Bundesarchiv / CC BY-SA 3.0).*

This paper deals with the history and the meaning of the Palace of the Republic, with a focus on the debates surrounding its destruction, the effects of heritage politics, and further the destruction of heritage and how it affects communities and the building of their identities. To address these issues, the paper will consider the theories of David Lowenthal on history and heritage, as well as the ideas of Dacia Viejo-Rose and Marie Louise Stig Sørensen on heritage and identity, aiming to get an overall impression through the example of the Palace of the Republic.

A new Palace for East-Berlin

When Erich Honecker became the General Secretary of the SED in 1971, his new politics of openness led to the international acceptance of the GDR as a state. Even though his new concept of building focused on social projects, like hospitals or apartment buildings, he wanted to make the long-lasting idea of a representational building for the state in the centre of Berlin come true, and this would serve as a display of the newly gained sovereignty, power, and self-confidence (Kuhrmann, 2006).

The GDR's building politics always followed representational or ideological purposes, or as Günter Mittag, a member of the Central Committee of the SED, said:

Figure 2 .
Construction site of the new city castle, Humboldt Forum. (Ziko 2016 / CC BY-SA 4.0).

> Our party has always seen building not simply as a technological task, but as a great social process. Why buildings are constructed, what is built and how, is determined in no small extend by social conditions. Creating buildings - this means enabling collectives of people to produce high-quality work and organise this work in the most effective way possible. (cited in Holfelders, 2010, p.77).

The perfect place for Honecker's constructional vision was the *Schlossplatz* in the middle of Berlin, a wasteland where the *Hohenzollernschloss,* the castle of the former Prussian emperor, used to be located. However, this former castle was blown up by the GDR's government in 1950 as a result of both the damages it sustained during the Second World War and the new socialist ideology. The idea of Honecker was to create a political building that at the same time functioned as a *cultural palace* for the country's people, as he promised them a new quality of life with his new economic and social politics (Kuhrmann, 2016).

As the new building needed to be ready by the ninth Party-meeting of the SED in 1976, Honecker and his building committee started an architectural competition, which was won by Heinz Graffunder, who became the leading architect, and architects of the *Bauakademie:* Christian Schulz, Bruno Flierl, Werner Roesler and Rolf-Rüdiger Eisentraut (Kuhrmann, 2016).

Figure 3. *Cultural event in the Palace of the Republic (Sindermann 1976, Bundesarchiv / CC BY-SA 3.0)*

The construction started in August 1973 and cost the state an immense sum of money. To have the Palace represent the state's power and competitiveness with the Western states, expensive construction materials such as marble, metal, and glass for the windows were imported from abroad. This, in turn, led to the construction process putting further pressure on the GDR's resources, which were already lacking throughout the country (Kuhrmann, 2006; Rettig, 2016).

The Palace's architecture was inspired by the International Style and consisted of three cubes: the northern cube with the meeting hall of the people's chamber, the southern cube with the hall for cultural events, and a connecting lounge between the two with all gastronomic institutions. The cubes were covered in white marble and the slightly overhanging window façade imitated the internationally-popular *Curtain Wall* with bronze toned glass that was imported from Belgium, which made the building transparent, especially at night when the Palace was brightly lit and passersby could see everything that was going on inside the cubes (Kuhrmann, 2006).

The Palace was organised in six strictly designed stories and had around 1000 rooms, which held a club for the youth, a bowling alley, several bars and cafés, thirteen different restaurants (making the Palace the biggest gastronomic institution in East Berlin), a gallery that

showed over 300 artworks by male artists from the GDR with the overarching topic May communists dream?, the entrances to the cultural and people's chamber hall, a theatre, interpreters cabins, a post office, a cloak room, and on the outside wall a tribune for the highest political ranks for days of military demonstrations (Kuhrmann, 2006; Holfelders, 2010).

As the Palace was supposed to be for the people, all cultural events or gastronomic institutions in the Palace were subsidised by up to 60%. Thus, in combination with the pricey materials that were used in its construction, running the Palace meant losing money on a regular basis, leading to the use of cheap asbestos as fire prevention (Kuhrmann, 2006; Beetz, 2016). The material, which was considered affordable and effective at that time and of which no one yet knew of its cancer-causing effects, would lead to problems after reunification.

In 1976, when the Palace was opened, Erich Honecker said in his opening speech:

> The Palace impressively gives evidence of the efficiency of our socialist society, of our national culture, of the sense of our work, which serves the well-being of the human being (cited in Wefing, 2016).

The new Palace for East Berlin did not only have a representational function aimed at the Western States and Russia, but it was also an ideological tool meant to capture the minds of the country's people and bind them to the state's idea. Some people surely avoided entering the Palace, as they knew exactly what kind of political system it represented. Still, in its thirteen-year existence as the cultural palace, it was the most visited building in all of East Germany.

With the changing political situation in 1989, first Erich Honecker declared his retreat from power and shortly thereafter the GDR government resigned. This lead to the opening of the borders, the fall of the Berlin Wall on the 9th of November, and the decision to have free and democratic elections in March 1990, which saw Lothar de Maiziére become the new minister of Berlin (Holfelders, 2010). The newly-elected parliament met in the exact same spot where the GDR's people's chamber used to meet and made the most important decisions for the divided Germany: in May 1990, they signed the contract for the currency-, economic- and social-union, and on the 23rd of August they decided that the GDR would join West Germany (Holfelders, 2010). Shortly after that, the Palace was closed down because of the asbestos and it awaited its fate.

A Political stage in cultural disguise

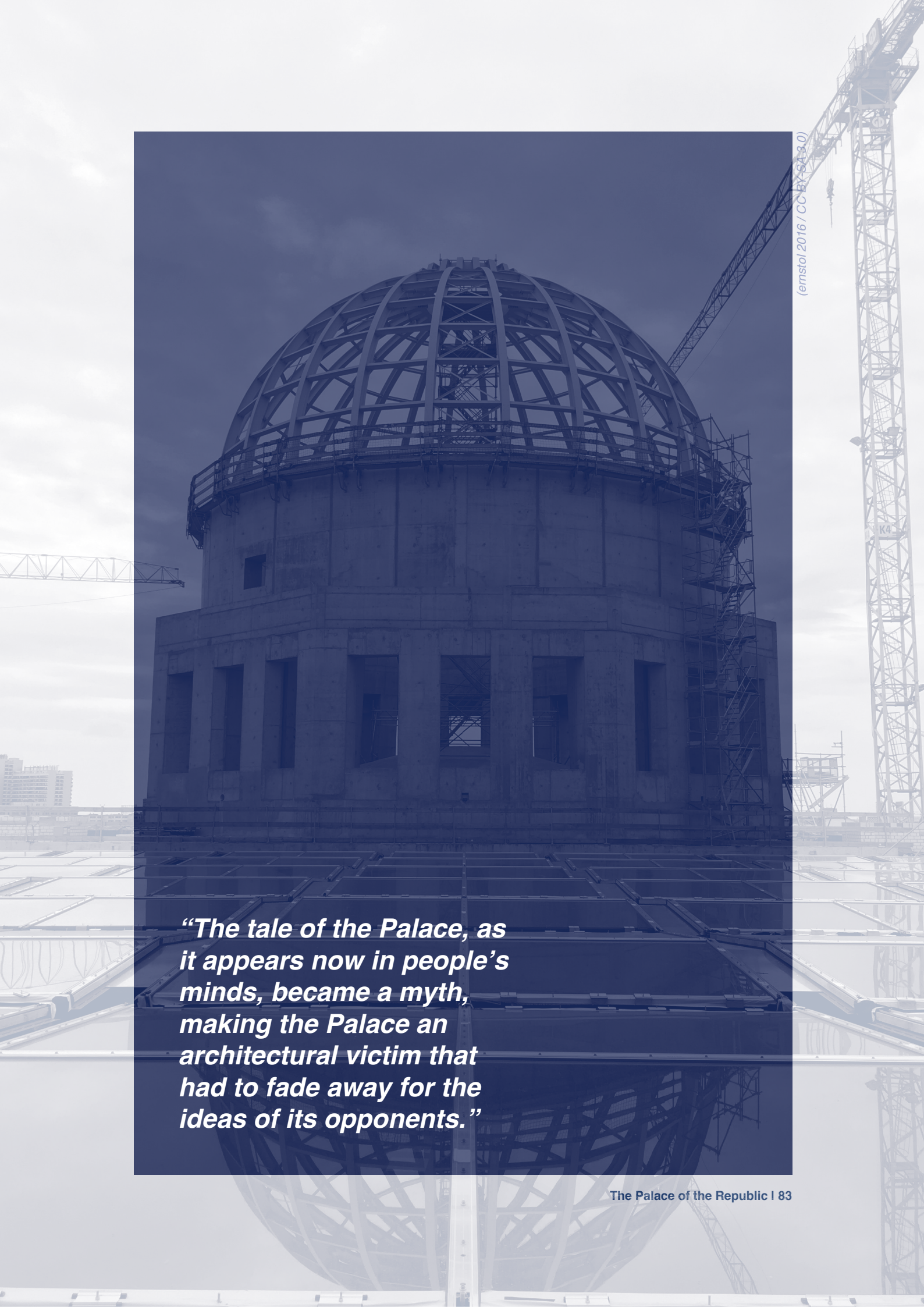
The Palace of the Republic was built to be a political symbol directed towards the West, proof that the GDR was internationally competitive and also a *home* for the country's people, and a stage for the meetings of the allegedly important people's chamber.

However, by now it is widely known that this was a hoax, as the people's chamber did not have any say in politics and only performed a representative function, while all the power rested in the hands of the SED. Looking at the statistics, this becomes evident: the people's chamber only met two to four times a year and the whole Palace was used for political purposes only 83 days out of its entire existence (Holfelders, 2010). Its main function was to be the cultural and people's palace. The cultural palaces that served the purposes of political education and formation were crucial elements in the GDR's nation-building program (Kuhrmann, 2006). A lot of the GDR's inhabitants flocked to the Palace every evening or weekend to enjoy the cultural events with subsidised tickets and food. In an interview with Jan Bartknecht in 2007, Wilhelm von Boddien, who later became a proponent of the Palace's destruction in favor of the City Castle, points out that there were few places outside of Berlin where the people could celebrate in as luxurious a place as the Palace, which gave them a glimpse into the big outside world that was otherwise inaccessible to them. Hence, for a lot of people, the Palace was something special. A witness, who was a student in East Berlin during the 1980s and worked as a dishwasher in the Palace's restaurants, claims that the Palace was for everyone and therefore constituted a place of identity. Every time her parents and friends came to visit, they wanted to go to the Palace to eat in the subsidised restaurants and attend the cultural events, as it was something special and unique in the whole country.

In the end, the Palace was a political and cultural building for the people of the state, but the true intention of giving something to the people that they normally would never get and using this as a disguised political education left a bitter taste and understandably made some people dislike and avoid the Palace. Or, in Moritz Holfelders' words, the Palace "became a mirror for a complex society that had learned to perfectly live in contradictions" (2010, p.118).

Experimental use after the reunification

After the closing of the Palace due to asbestos, the selling and distribution of its furniture and materials to Berlin restaurants and museums, its deconstruction back to its shell, and the first decision for its complete demolition by the Bundestag in 2002, the Palace got a new function: beginning in 2003 the Palace was made available for temporary use and several Berlin artists used the empty space for experimental exhibitions, events, and ideas. Beginning with the performance of the *Wagnerkomplex* by Christian von Borries, the Palace started to revitalise, and this continued with the play *Berlin Alexanderplatz* by Frank Castorf from the Berlin Volksbühne, and the large-scale installation Der Berg, or the flooding of the Palace for a boat trip (Holfelders, 2010; Kuhrmann, 2006). Even the famous director Wim Wenders used the Palace for recordings, and the Norwegian artist Lars Ø installed the illuminated letters *Zweifel* on the Palace's roof, creating a new image of the *Palace of Doubt,* fostering resignation and new reflective thoughts and discourses in Berlin's diverse society.



(ernstol 2016 / CC BY-SA 3.0)

“The tale of the Palace, as it appears now in people’s minds, became a myth, making the Palace an architectural victim that had to fade away for the ideas of its opponents.”

The different temporary uses made people in Berlin think about the Palace's future again, fuelling new open discourses. Finally, in 2005 the *Union for the Palace* was created and they began to fight for the Palace's preservation (Kuhrmann, 2006). However, politicians insisted on continuing the deconstruction, meaning that the experimental phase had to end in 2005. Even though the artistic use of the Palace could not save it for the future, it still fostered a lot of changes. Crucially, it led to "the sensitization in the art scene for political questions so that things that seem impossible can still work out" (Rottmann & Deuflhard, 2006, p. 236).

The Palace supported the experimental, impulsive character that Berlin had in the 1990s and early 2000s, with empty spaces being used for creative ideas and actions. It therefore addressed the young generation that hadn't been involved in the whole Palace debate in the first place, as they didn't have a stake in it, nor did they identify with it. But through the period of temporary uses, their perspective changed:

> […] The connection of the Palace with the memory of the GDR and the related ascriptions and projections will fade. In contrary to that another perspective could acquire meaning, which in case of the Palace reminds more of its use as an artistic experimental space in times after the reunification. (Danyel, 2016, p.44)

Emotional debates over two lost buildings

After the closing of the Palace in 1990, there had already been some voices that demanded the building's destruction, such as the author and historian Joachim Fest, who proclaimed the reconstruction of the Hohenzollern Castle as a symbol of the victory over communism (Mühlberg, 2001). In the newspapers, the future of the Palace was intensely discussed and it was sometimes referred to as a "socialist pilgrimage site" or "socialist open-air museum" (Schmid, 2007, p. 247).

At the beginning of the debate, the German authorities actually considered moving the new seat of the government into the Palace or to the Spree Island, but due to financial restrictions and the asbestos in the Palace, this idea was quickly dropped (Kuhrmann, 2006). From 1993 on, the Berlin Senate and private institutions opened architectural competitions on a regular basis with the aim of finding a new solution for the *Schlossplatz,* but this was always with the secret vision to tear the Palace down (Kuhrmann, 2006). In the end, none of the competitions lead to a solution. While throughout the 1990s the people of Berlin lost interest in the closed Palace in the centre of their city, Wilhelm von Boddien had the idea to recreate the old Prussian City Castle and intensively pushed his vision forward. Several surveys conducted by the opinion research institute Forsa showed that most of the people of Berlin were against the destruction of the Palace, or at least against the reconstruction of the City Castle (Taz archive, 1995). However, despite this and the financial restrictions that existed, the German Bundestag decided in

Figure 4. *Destruction of the Palace of the Republic. (Wolf 2008 / CC BY-SA 3.0)*

favour of the Palace's destruction in 2006. Following this decision, the destruction phase lasted until 2008 and left Berlin's centre with a green, flat meadow. In 2013, the construction of the new *Humboldtforum* began, which will be a place with the vision of cultural connection and remembrance planned by the Italian architect Francesco Stella. As of writing, we are still awaiting its completion.

While these occurrences seem quite linear, an emotional debate happened in the open that involved all kinds of people: proponents of the Palace, proponents of the City Castle, historians, artists that were in favour of the temporary uses, East and West Berlin citizens, East and West Germans, politicians, and time witnesses.

First of all, the debates seemed to approach the Eastern-Western-conflict. Tearing down the Palace as a symbol of socialist or communist power can be seen as a display of victory over the latter, demonstrating the feelings of superiority of the Western side over East Germans. Obviously, East Germans saw themselves being ruled by the West German powers and not incorporated into them. The Western perspective simply saw the Palace as residual waste, polluted, closed down, and bearing witness to the end of the dictatorship regime of the GDR. Although I refer to the Eastern and Western perspectives, this does not mean that the two German sides stood in unity against each other. In fact, there were people in favour of and against the Palace on both sides. Still, a lot of former GDR citizens saw the idea of the Palace's destruction as a "symbol for the disregard of their life-historical experiences" (Prokasky, 2016, pp.7-8).

One can argue that the Palace, as appreciated by most GDR citizens, stood for a positive memory that just did not fit into the picture that the West German politicians had of the socialist country (Sebrow, 2016). Despite that, the Palace transmitted broad historical information, not only about the GDR itself, but also about the reunification. Hence, in the debates that were fuelled by Eastern and Western perspectives, each arguing about their right or wrong opinion, in this case, the Palace took on another role. Heinrich Wefing from *Zeit-Magazine* states, "So in the public perception the Palace did not become a symbol of the common, but of the dividing" (2016, p. 25). He further states that "the Palace is not a static, pacified, uncontroversial place of memory, but an eclectic, associatively shimmering, controversial" place (Wefing, 2016, p. 28), thus emphasising the ambiguity of the place. On one side, the Palace was an important cultural space for the people of a country, a meeting point for networking, and a special architectural work, but on the other side it represented a dictatorship. Dealing with this entanglement of different meanings turned into an impossible task. Under these circumstances, the deconstruction and annihilation of the Palace and all of its various meanings was definitely the easy way out, or, as Moritz Holfelders states:

> Not tearing down the Palace would have meant to dispute everything it represented in the thirteen years, five months and 24 days of its opening as well as in the years of its slow disappearing since 1989: the oppressive atmosphere and the awakening spirit of the GDR, the attempt to coopate the people as well as the subtle anarchy in the system […], the difficulty dealing with history and the catchy power of symbols, a globally celebrated awakening in the times of the Zwischennutzung from 2003, and for the evidence that even a burdened building can invent itself newly. (Holfelders, 2010, p.120)

When Wilhelm von Boddien brought up the idea to rebuild the old Prussian City Castle on the exact spot of the Palace, the debates took another turn. The proponents of the City Castle acted quickly, creating a *Castle-Lobby* that consisted of high-ranking academics and politicians who were able to easily acquire money and power, while the proponents of the Palace did not manage to really unite and perform intensive actions (Wuigk & Raulien, 2006).

The main focus of the Castle's proponents was giving back a piece of national identity to the people. Klaus Rüdiger Landowsky from the German CDU party stated on that matter: "If you don't know where you come from, you don't know where you want to go" (Riepe, 2007). While the Castle-proposition's arguments emphasised the beauty of the Castle in comparison to the Palace and the desire to give back a piece of national identity to the people, the Palace-proposition saw the Castle as a meaningless shell in the facade of a long-lost building with no connection to its former self. While Anna-Inés Hennet (2007, p. 59) emphasised that the reconstructed Castle would have the character of a sculpture or an object with no special function except for being beautiful and awakening or preserving memories, the former Palace's architect, Bruno Flierl,

questioned the actual values of the new Castle, as originally they were the values of the Prussian Emperors and they lacked cultural and political viability in contemporary society (Dolata, 2007, p. 250-251).

Indeed, with the intention of reviving an identity from over one hundred years ago, one needs to ask the question of how this could be done. The new Castle will not be authentic, as its reconstructed façade and especially the modern, ahistoric interior will not remind one of long-lost times. Further, one could ask for whom can this building function as a memory marker of the former Prussian Empire? Young generations have no connection to the old Castle and will see it as something completely contemporary, not considering its symbolism. Creating the *Humboldtforum* with the new intention of remembering and including all kinds of historical perspectives seems like a humbler idea. This is how Dietrich Mühlbergs' vision in a *Zeit-Magazine* article kind of became true:

> In Berlin, it is indeed necessary to appreciate the contradicting memorial culture of both German divided societies and to somehow bring them together. At this symbolically loaded place of young political history, this could only work through one solution, which offers the collective memories of both sides possibilities of identification. (Mühlberg 2001)

Still, the *Humboldtforum's* outer shape will always be a reminder of the victory of the emotional nostalgia of older generations, and an attempt to go back in time by erasing four decades of people's collective memories.

How to remember the ambiguous Palace

The virtue of letting go, which could have been demonstrated by the advocates of the City Castle, now could also be applied by those of the Palace. The Palace is gone physically and the *Humboldtforum* is being constructed. The next step is to figure out how to remember the Palace.

From 2019 on, the *Humboldtforum* will incorporate the exhibitions of several history and art museums, in cooperation with the museums of Museum Island, as well as a Museum des Ortes, which will focus on the evolving history of the area where the former Prussian Castle and the Palace of the Republic used to stand (now home to the *Humboldtforum*). As of writing, the experts working with the director of the museum, Dr. Judith Prokasky, are still debating about how to remember such an ambiguous site as the Palace in the museum. What has been decided thus far is that in the museum's basement and ground floor, there will be space dedicated to discussing and remembering the Palace, whether through installations or the old furniture and materials, such as rescued photographs, that are currently stored either in the museum storage in Spandau or in the German Historical Museum (Prokasky, 2016).

In 2016 the *Humboldtforum* held an expert meeting to discuss what is suitable for the Palace's former interior decor and the installations. Some points of this discussion will be evaluated here. Of course, the furniture can't simply be displayed, but has to be commented on, or, as Dr. Jürgen Danyel from the *Time-Historical Research* Potsdam said in the meeting: "The pieces have to be 'displayed in the situation in which they are now, as a residue of history" (2016, p.73). The objects certainly hold symbolic meaning and even the missing of the objects transmits a message, as Philipp Oswalt (2016, p.81), professor of architecture, commented. The only way to handle those objects is to provide context and commentary, creating awareness of their history. The following problem is the authenticity of the objects and the picture that is provided of the Palace. As Herman Parzinger said, "The acceptance of the *Humboldtforum* depends on the adequate display of the Palace" (2016, p.55). As the Palace is gone, it should be remembered in a sufficient manner, not by showing disconnected pieces but instead by trying to show the whole puzzle of the Palace's meaning. Visitors to the Humboldtforum will mostly be tourists and future, younger generations with no personal connection to the GDR and no idea of the loaded meaning of the place. The ambiguity the Palace held is important here. Basic knowledge about the GDR's political and social systems has to be generated for the visitors to be able to classify the objects and background stories. Dr. Prokasky questioned the notion of authenticity herself: "Are there possibilities to display or make accessible authentic objects without neutralizing them at the same time?" (2016, p. 81). The politician Lothar de Maiziére closed by arguing that the objects are not the important pieces, but it is the story of what happened in the Palace that has to be transferred (2016, p. 83). There is still time before the opening to find an adequate way of remembering the Palace, but the important thing is that the ambiguous story must always be kept in mind.

Effects of heritage politics

Returning to the decision process of the German Bundestag regarding the Palace's future, from a heritage preservation point of view, the whole scenario seems highly inadequate. Even though the Palace was not yet listed as a heritage site, it still held enough value to become one in the future:

> As a government charged governmental and cultural building the Palace had an outstanding historical testimonial value, as it mirrored the political, social and cultural conditions in the GDR. It became a symbol of the forty year long division, the changing times and the reunification process. (Kuhrmann,2016, p.23)

After the reunification, the Palace became property of the united German state, making all decisions about it state-based. There are three heritage governance models, of which one is state-based. The others are owner-based and user-based. The problem with the state-based model is that "cultural policies are subject to politically motivated change […]. There is also the possibility that the political opposition is not included in the model,

thereby making it vulnerable to corruption" (Siu et al., 2001, p. 147). In the case of the Palace, it seems like the politicians were biased and unable to make truly rational decisions. The user-based model would have been a better way to deal with the Palace. In this model, powerful groups form themselves and identify the beneficiaries of the site with short and long term needs (Siu et al., 2001). Considering the public surveys conducted by Forsa in the 1990s, the outcome of a referendum would definitely have been different. In this case, the biggest mistake was not considering future generations and their stake in the situation. In the 1990s, there was an expert commission working on the case that advised the government to tear down the Palace. But when the temporary uses were installed in the early 2000s, the value of the place changed completely. Establishing another expert commission would have been the right action to take at that point. As Siu et. al. (2001) state, value is always a subjective element and its change cannot easily be predicted from the beginning. Therefore, every step has to be considered twice before taking action. In the case of the Palace, the future generations, those with a stake in its preservation, would have certainly benefitted from the old Palace's various, temporary uses. These liminal activities opened the Palace as a free space for creative ideas, changing the old meaning of the Palace itself to something for the good of the people. The shape of the new City Castle, on the contrary, refers back to the past, with no point of identification for future generations.

The destruction as creation of a myth

> It is well known that heritage sites act as anchors of symbolic meaning in urban and rural spaces, that they contribute to the construction of places, and that they are crucial to the relationship between people and their built environment. (Sørensen & Viejo-Rose, 2015)

This quote refers to the notion that communities build identity through their heritage. As heritage holds information of the past, tales, and myths, it shapes future generations and their sense of belonging. But as David Lowenthal writes, "Bias is the main point of heritage" (1996, p.122), and he further states, "Prejudiced pride in the past is not a sorry consequence of heritage; it is its essential purpose. Heritage thereby attests our identity and affirms our worth" (1996, p. 122). Heritage that is created through stories of events and tales of time witnesses is always subjective and shaped by the mind of the storyteller. Lowenthal further states that "heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error," (1996, p. 121), and that it "mandates misreading of the past [and] becomes cherished myths" (1996, p. 129). Especially in the event of conflict, heritage and its meanings are challenged and different perspectives on the happenings or objects of that heritage appear, which are then passed on to future generations. As Dacia Viejo-Rose and Marie Louise Stig Sørensen write:

> [I]nterpretations of the destruction wrought by conflict are cemented, and often follow the same essentialist of events and relationships promulgated during the war. Both victory and victimhood have their advantages, and so both groups and individual political entrepreneurs compete for the most advantageous positions within the conflict narrative – of which the trope of "glorious martyr" becomes especially sought after […]. (2015, p.287)

The case of the Palace is not a result of conflict or war, but the background of the story is clearly political, with two contesting sides emotionally fighting for what they think is the ethical and right way. Thus, applying those heritage theories to this case, one could argue that the tale of the Palace, as it appears now in the people's minds and in a large section of public opinion, has become a myth, making the building an architectural martyr that had to fade away for the ideas of its opponents to prevail.

If the Palace was not closed down, or was simply cleared of asbestos and reopened with a different use (whether as a political stage for the new government or as a cultural centre), there most likely would not have been such emotional debates. People would not have questioned the decisions on such a big scale. It is likely that the Palace's old meaning would have just subtly faded and then evolved into a new one, as a symbol of the newly united Germany. But in reality, by making such a big deal out of the case, having all kinds of people debate over the building's future, even up to the point in which it was used for experimental art, involving another generation, and emotional demonstrations, the whole case turned into a drama that really started shaping people's perspectives and opinions. Thinking about the Palace and its intense public demise now, the building seems like a martyr, the last symbol of its time. It is easy to condemn the new City Castle when, for the sake of its existence, another building with a lot of meaning for the people's identity had to vanish into oblivion. In the sense of victory and victimhood, the Palace won the battle of mystification. Although it is not physically present, it will still remain in people's minds as part of their identity, telling the story of an ambiguous battle over a nation's historical record. And therefore, it has become heritage in its absence, even though some politicians would have liked it to disappear from people's consciousness. Or, to say it with Hermann Parzinger's words, "When memorial sites cease to exist, they develop a much stronger culture of remembrance" (2016, p. 54).

Conclusion

Through the example of the Palace of the Republic, it can be seen that heritage, in this case a building with crucial historical and social significance, can bear so much value that it can never completely disappear, even after its physical destruction. The debates about its future that were fuelled from all sides, from the proponents of the City Castle to members of the Berlin art scene and the younger generations, lasted over a decade, creating tales that are now part of the nation's heritage and will remain so for future generations. The *Humboldtforum*, which bears the burden of representing this heritage

in its halls, is facing a difficult task, as the spirit of the Palace and its story has to be transmitted completely and must address people and generations that were not involved in the process. Transmitting the myth of the Palace can be difficult, but this is the only way that the Humboldtforum will be accepted and appreciated by all stakeholders.

In the case of the Palace, the way heritage works become further evident: because of its destruction and the intense debates about it, the Palace will never be forgotten and will continue to be significant for the people's identity.

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Figures

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Katrine Majlund Jensen

An Alternative to "Grand Narratives"

Artistic practice as preservation process

Introduction

If preservation is essentially alterations in the fabric of an object, then just as essentially is can be described as meaning-creation and interpretation. The starting point for examining the link between heritage preservation and ideology is therefore to think of tangible and intangible elements—fabric and meaning—as a complex fusion. If this is the core of preservation practice, then the scrutinisation of the very dynamics behind how we choose, use, and make meaning of heritage—especially with overtly ideological implications—is urgent. The interest of this paper is to go beyond what objects might represent in terms of ideology, although this is also important. A focus on what the object represents indicates a one-way flow of meaning from fabric to perceiver, where the object radiates a certain ideology. Rather, it is the intention of the paper to contribute knowledge on how such representations come into being and even more on how they can be contested.

Such an investigation can have many disciplinary departure points. The paper will especially draw on theories from the fields of aesthetics and experimental preservation, as this allows one to critically reflect on the very nature of heritage and how we perceive it. It will be suggested that artistic practice, as a way of re-contextualizing heritage, can be seen both as a process of preservation as well as being capable of making significant comments on how the meaning of heritage can be performed.

Thus, the paper will examine the following research questions: How can artistic practice contest conventional preservation practice, and through what means does it do so? What potential does it offer more broadly as preservation practice, especially in relation to ideologically connoted architecture?

More than using the questions to examine a specific case study, a case study will be used to examine the questions, as the interest lies in the potential of artistic practice itself. The case study used is *Bungalow Germania*, the German contribution to the 14th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale 2014. It is an architectural montage of two historic buildings built for political purposes: a replica of the Kanzlerbungalow in Bonn and the original German Pavilion in Venice. The paper will create a theoretical foundation, introducing conventional preservation discourse and establishing experimental preservation as the counteraction. This is followed by a specific examination of artistic practice as used in the case study. Lastly, the broader potential of this as a voice in heritage preservation will be discussed.

The Authorised Heritage Discourse

If artistic practice is an alternative voice within heritage preservation, the discourse against which it positions itself must be established. There is not one position representing *conventional preservation practice*, but a dominant discourse can nevertheless be identified. In her book *Uses of Heritage*, Laurajane Smith (2006) presents what she terms the *Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD)*. It is a discourse driven by expert knowledge that naturalises and reinforces certain narratives, often connected to national identity (Smith, 2006, p.30). Smith states how this discourse:

> [...] frames heritage audiences as passive receptors of the authorized meaning of heritage, it also creates significant barriers for active public negotiation about the meaning and nature of heritage[...] (2006, p.44)

It is exactly the room for negotiation about the meaning and nature of heritage that is the focus of this paper, something which the AHD actively devalues. It should be remarked how the AHD is not a fixed set of parameters that experts draw on and it also varies in implementation. However, it surely is a power domination, which at times silently and invisibly leaves the visitor out of the process of negotiating meaning and interpretation of heritage. To be able to challenge the AHD, an awareness of its *modus operandi* is first required.

Smith introduces some key consequences of the AHD, some of which will be touched upon in this paper, as the case study will also be examined in the light of these. Firstly, the AHD is a statement of a past that experts will look after. Thereby, "the very real emotional and cultural work that the past does as heritage for individuals" is disengaged, leaving the past as one singular entity (Smith, 2006, p.29). Secondly, it is a claim that heritage

should be saved for future generations, which thereby discourages active creation and alteration of meanings connected to heritage. Importantly, this decreases the option of using the past to define and contest present cultural meanings and phenomena more broadly (Smith, 2006, p.29). Thirdly, the AHD upholds an idea of boundedness. It is the idea that the heritage in question is easily mapped and documented, making it promotable for the public as singular national treasures (Smith, 2006, p. 31).

Besides providing a contextual background for analysis, the introduction of the AHD also serves to distinguish the different attempts to criticise it. Here, the introduction of alternative narratives to the grand ones might not intrinsically be a critique of the AHD. Such alternative proposals might also be operating from the logics of the AHD, by way of imposing and authorising them. Thus, the question regarding experimental preservation is whether it has the ability to both criticise the AHD and simultaneously avoid operating from the same logic. It is for its ability to both offer alternative narratives and at the same time not authorise them that its usefulness and qualities should be measured.

Experimental preservation

After having identified what could be called conventional preservation and communication of heritage, a proposal for a counter-logic will be presented. This serves two purposes: first, to establish a position that both criticises but also presents alternative ways of dealing with heritage compared to the AHD. Secondly, it serves to clarify the concept of preservation that is employed in the remaining part of paper.

The book *Experimental Preservation* comprises viewpoints of a counter-logic to conventional preservation practice (Pailos, 2016). It is simultaneously a confident and vulnerable attempt to contest the very process with which something becomes heritage. The confidence lies in the urgency of the need to experiment with and negotiate heritage in different and more democratic ways—the vulnerability of experimental preservation being the experiment itself. As Pailos states, “Experiment suggests the dangerous possibility of failure, something to avoid when working on valuable historical and cultural objects” (Pailos, 2016, p.11). Nevertheless, experimentation is proposed as the game changer. In its essence, experimental preservation questions the authority—often governmental—that preserves in the name of the common good (Pailos, 2016, p.15). Experimental preservation is intrinsically an interdisciplinary investigation of objects, since it wants to move away from the hierarchy of knowledge and disciplinary patents of objects (Pailos, 2016, p.11). With this in mind, an indication of how heritage value is ultimately a construct becomes apparent; does the historian possess inherent qualities to judge the meaning of historical documents? Or does meaning equally unfold through the artist’s recontextualisation of the same documents? More than right or wrong interpretations, they are different methodologies to reach interpretation. This points to experimental preservation not as a mere theoretical critique of a discourse, but as a

practicable alternative to conventional preservation. Experimental preservation is thus the call for methodologies normally discarded from preservation practice, first and foremost insisting on experimentation as a key method.

This leaves us with an expanded conception of what preservation stands for. With the experimental approach, it has come to integrate and test the potential of the obsolete and unworthy as heritage, but also to use untraditional methods of intervention and framing of these objects. Just as importantly, this is a concept of preservation underlining its potential as a critical method, the *critical* nature of the preservation act crystallising through direct and visible intervention (Pailos, 2006, p. 17). This can be said to oppose the criticality attributed by academics to already *authorised* heritage. Experimental preservation is thus an act, often in which the choice and appropriation of the given object is obviously contested, as opposed to critical thinking kept at a distance.

Such a conception of preservation might seem vague, or even imprecise. However, a broader understanding of what preservation encompasses should not be equated with vagueness. What this understanding does very precisely is highlight preservation as an act of anti-essentialist meaning creation and not just physical maintenance or alteration. In the following section, the case study of *Bungalow Germania* will examine the potential of such experimental preservation and its practical dimension. In line with the interdisciplinary approach, the focus will be on the potential of artistic practice to communicate political architectural heritage.

Bungalow Germania

At the 14th International Architecture Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia, all participating countries were asked to engage with their history of national architecture, responding to the motto *Absorbing Modernity: 1914 – 2014*. As a somewhat provocative hypothesis, artistic director of the Biennale Rem Koolhaas put forth the idea that national diversity has ceased to be reflected in the modern-day language of global architectural. With this statement, Koolhaas pushed the buttons of national identity, memory, and representation. *Bungalow Germania,* commissioned by Savvas Ciriacidis and Alex Lehnerer, came to be Germany's response (Bungalow, 2014, p. 1).

The German contribution is an architectural montage consisting of two historical buildings with overtly political pasts. One is the German Pavilion in the *Giardini della Biennale* in Venice itself, the other a partial replica of the Kanzlerbungalow (Chancellor's Bungalow) in Bonn, and by crosscutting the German Pavilion, a montage of two architectural languages was created (Bungalow, 2014, p.3). Originally constructed as the Bavarian Pavilion in 1909 by Daniele Donghi, the German Pavilion was given its current name in 1912. However, its architectural style and meaning has changed throughout history, and it was fundamentally remodelled in 1938 by the architect Ernst Haiger, whose design

language was that of the neoclassicism commonly used during Nazi Germany (Uncube, 2014). With its massive pillars, symmetry, and clearly defined entrance, the building leaves little for the imagination. In line with national socialist aesthetics, it formulates a statement of power in stone, communicating a message of subordination to its visitor. In 1964, the pavilion went through its last significant renovation, during which a wall and its dropped ceilings were removed in order to make a central space with more light (Bungalow, 2014, p. 2). To have a piece of architecture with such immense political connotations representing the German nation abroad is, to this day, a recurrent subject of much debate, with one side of the argument calling for demolition (Independent, 2010). The history of exhibitions in the Pavilion is worth noting. Here, exhibits have started to comment on the exhibition space itself, showing awareness of the space as a *historical* setting and not just as a backdrop for exhibitions (Zeller, 2009, p. 109).

Intersecting with the Pavilion is a partial replica of the Kanzlerbungalow in Bonn. The former German Chancellor's official residence and work place was built by architect Sep Ruf in 1964, when Bonn was the capital of West Germany (Stiftung). According to modernist American ideals, the building uses transparency, clarity, and simplicity as its architectural language, and it was built with massive glass windows to view the wide vistas of its surroundings.. Built to reflect a new democratic beginning, the Kanzlerbungalow was raised on a political fundament. At the time of erection, West Germany was striving to integrate the idea of the European welfare state along the lines of growth and collective prosperity. Just as much as a governmental headquarters, the Bungalow was framed as "the living room of the nation" in its branding towards the public (Bungalow, 2014, pp. 1,2). The building became iconic through its circulation throughout different media. Regarding its history of function and preservation, however, it is worth noting how the building was "de-functionalised" and soon slipped into oblivion after Berlin became the capital of Germany in 1999 (Bungalow, 2014, p. 2). Originally built as the architectural answer to new ideals, the Bungalow has now entered a phase of the reformulation of its meaning.

Between citizenship and statelessness

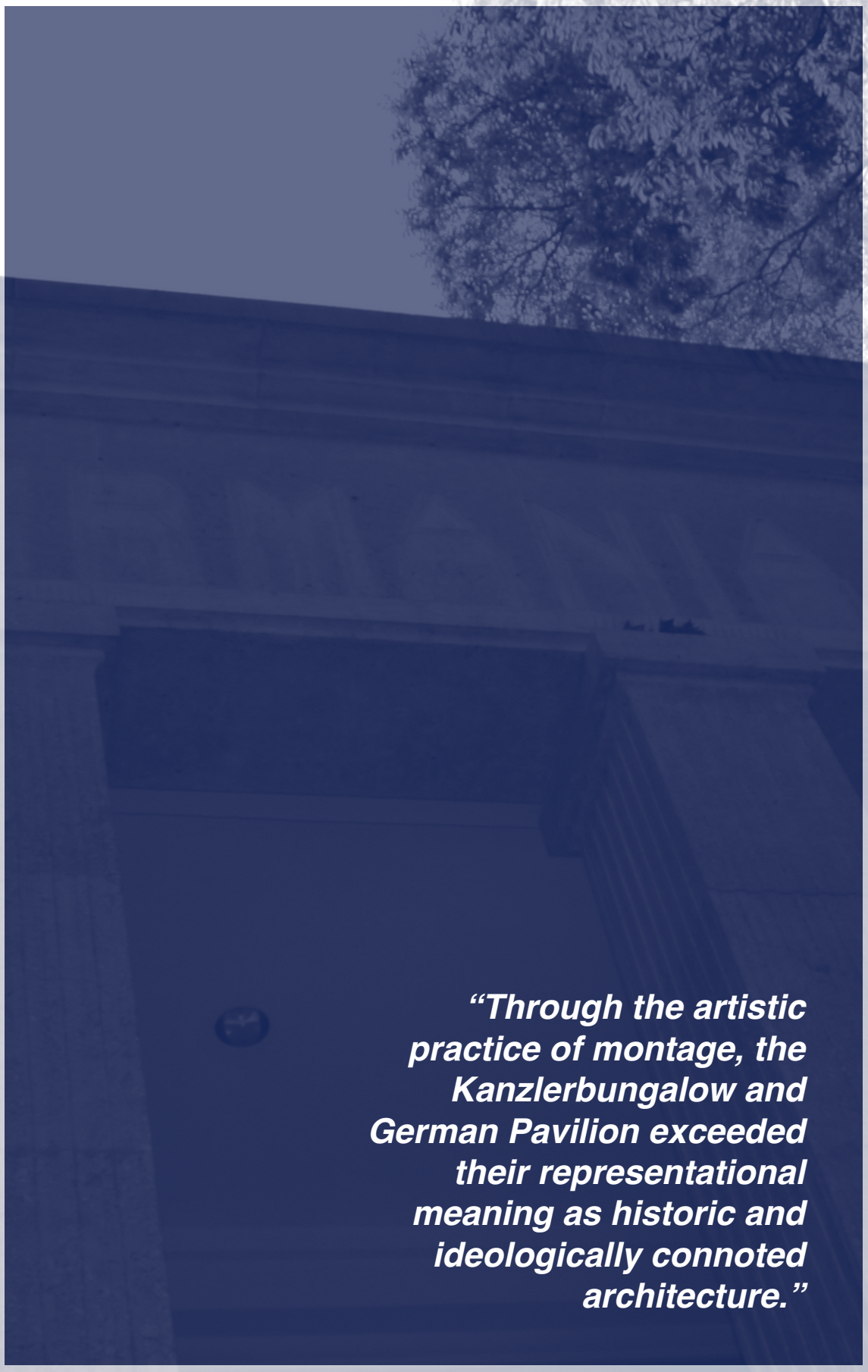
Both the German Pavilion and the Bungalow were built to reflect German national identity at two different points in history. Although different, both buildings have a history of political instrumentalisation. Today, both buildings lend themselves to the reformulation of what their significances are as heritage in *present* society. This state of uncertainty is a key phase when entering a discussion of preservation status, and exactly the phase that the experimental preservationist wants to make visible. In this phase of preservation, there is a latent potential for negotiation If more attention is needed in the negotiation process of the value and meaning of the heritage, a definition of the very nature of this condition of uncertainty might be helpful to form a clearer platform from which to negotiate.

Here, the concept of the *liminal* is helpful (Andrews, 2012, p. 24). It is a concept that is able to describe the seemingly unimportant and marginalised. Furthermore, it is a spatially oriented concept able to address the social aspects and power-relations of physical, tangible phenomena, like that of heritage. Here, the liminal defines the borderland, the state of in-between, the threshold reflecting both cultural and temporal conditions, as exemplified in rites or life phases. Or, one could say a *transitional uncertainty* (Andrews, 2012, p.24). The *liminal* can be said to be an analogy for the condition of the stateless person. "They have physical but not social reality, hence they have to be hidden, since it is a paradox, a scandal, to see what ought not to be there" (Andrews, 2012, p. 27). The quote is not to be seen as a direct description of the condition of the *Kanzlerbungalow* or the German Pavilion—both of which are still accessible and visible to the public. To see the buildings through the lens of the *liminal* is, however, to spot their current state of physical reality and at the same time realising their shaky social reality. Should they be demolished, as suggested for the German Pavilion, since it is "a scandal, to see what ought not to be there"? Both buildings should intentionally represent German national identity, and here the liminal offers a perspective that directly questions their national belonging and significance in the present: to what extent can they be incorporated as *citizens,* alive and forming a dynamic part of German heritage? Or do they instead have to become discarded and *stateless*? The important remark here is how both scenarios form a social reality for the buildings. To assign a non-social reality to heritage is also a form of social reality, just one of negativity. Ultimately, heritage placed at the margins of society is also the heritage that sometimes reflects it the most.

When entering a discussion of preservation status, a building thus also enters a liminal condition. Instead of exhibiting answers to what *national architecture* looks like for Germany, it becomes clear how the German Exhibition with Bungalow Germania is exhibiting exactly the liminal condition of historical political architecture itself. It is an exhibition that ultimately exhibits the uncertainty of meaning connected to the buildings nowadays. It is exactly here that the experiment is able to facilitate negotiation. In the following section, the artistic strategy of montage will be examined as a strategy of such negotiation.

Montage as tool of negotiation

As an artistic strategy, mostly known from the Avant-Garde and Modernist Art movements, the montage combines significations into a collision (Druckrey, 1994, p. 5). As suggested by architect and professor Luca Galofaro, montage entails certain operations: "multiplying signs, the exchange of scale, reversals, grafts, superimposition, and erasure" (3NTA, 2016). It is an artistic strategy that can be said to frame the signifier as discursive or dialectical, "the dialectical mission is to fuse fragments as concentrated form; the discursive one is to create fissures or interruptions in the established order" (Druckrey, 1994, p. 5).



(Oyml S, 2009/ CC BY-SA 4.0)

"Through the artistic practice of montage, the Kanzlerbungalow and German Pavilion exceeded their representational meaning as historic and ideologically connoted architecture."

As an artistic practice, montage is experimental in nature—it wants to explore signifiers through rupture and collision, thereby provoking the cognition and the convenience of reading signs as fixed representations.

As montage is a strategy often applied to two-dimensional mediums like photography and film, the installation of Bungalow Germania becomes a bold, large-scale, and three-dimensional montage. In Bungalow Germania, the part of the Kanzlerbungalow is a partial replica of the original standing in Bonn. With its modernist simplicity and glass facades, it intersects with the bombastic white stone walls and high ceilings of the Pavilion. Going through the ten-meter-high portico of the Pavilion, visitors are suddenly met by the low and warm wooden ceiling of the Bungalow. With the Pavilion already placed on a podium, the Bungalow is now strangely raised from the ground in its integration into the Pavilion, disrupting the graphic and harmonious simplicity of the Kanzlerbungalow that was originally intended. Importantly, the montage results in a disruption of the function of the wide glass sections of the Bungalow, which before communicated the idea of transparency, but now offer a disrupted view of cold stone walls .

Thus, the montage positions the materiality in new contexts, which ultimately disrupts their former functions. The montage makes it clear how the different architectural parts are dependent on the totality of the building and even its surroundings to support their meaning and what they represent. In overlapping the two buildings, two national narratives are brought together. However, through the artistic practice of montage—with its “multiplying of signs, exchange of scale and erasure” (3NTA, 2016)—the chronology of the narratives are erased. Through the montage of two clear architectural and political languages, the buildings arrive at a third and new point, which exceeds the totality of the two together. The buildings no longer pose the question of what they specifically represent in German history and national identity. Through the strategy of montage, the buildings now arrive at a more fundamental question concerning the extent to which history and definitions of national identity can be accessed through heritage.

To clarify, this is not to say that the montage has the purpose of revealing the buildings as empty signifiers. As described, the buildings are both loaded with meaning, representing political ideologies directly expressed through the choice and composition of their respective materiality. Rather than proving an emptiness of meaning, the result of the montage is a creation of awareness of the very dynamics with which we make sense of history and national identity; that we use heritage as fixed signs of representation for our identity, and further, that speculations of demolition and preservation are attitudes expressing our like or dislike of these representations. The montage leads to a questioning of the assigned meanings of each building, thereby complicating the link between the material and its narrative. Through the architectural installation, the buildings are not purely exhibited—they exhibit each other. It is to take two outspokenly ideologically-infused buildings, both in a liminal condition, and make a third space where reflection

by the visitor is encouraged. It is to show the vulnerability of our interpretations and it points to the porous nature of heritage and the meaning assigned to it. Here, montage offers itself as a strategy of negotiation. It creates the aforementioned "fissures and interruptions in the established order" (Druckrey, 1994, p.5)—interruptions that do not resolve easily into grand narratives.

Heritage from representation to performativity

Until now, the paper has sought to establish the broader context of heritage as discourse, and experimentalism has been introduced as a strategy of heritage negotiation. The concrete examination of the artistic practice of montage has served to show the practical dimension of such experimentalism, and how it can contest conventional preservation. In the remaining part of the paper, the research question of the potential it offers more broadly as an alternative preservation discourse will be dealt with. As the aim of the paper is not to define the essence of artistic practice—something that would require a paper in itself and could only take the form of investigation—the first research question has been dealt with through a specific example. However, to be able to talk about a broader potential and avoid generalisations about what artistic practice essentially does, the findings from the case study will be articulated through the concept of the performative.

In her book *Uses of Heritage*, Laurajane Smith iintroduces the concept of performativity in relation to heritage. She notes:

> It reinforces the idea that heritage is not a passive subject of management and conservation or tourist visitation – but rather an active process engaged with the construction and negotiation of meaning through remembering. (2006, p.66)

This statement is hard to disagree with. However, what the statement emphasises is not how different aspects of heritage (the visitor, management, remembrance etc.) appear as more or less performative in their acts, but rather that performativity is a productive and intriguing paradigm through which one can think about different aspects of heritage in a more dynamic way.

The *performative* is an elastic concept and used within several disciplines, making it even more necessary to specify exactly how it applies to specific situations. The above statement links performativity to heritage as process and negotiation, which is the stepping-stone for extracting the outcomes of the case study of Bungalow Germania. However, instead of just thinking theoretically about all aspects of heritage as possible performative acts, I will ask more specifically wherein the performativity occurs. If one can be specific in answering this question, useful information might be derived that could be applicable to lines of thought when dealing with particularly difficult and ideologically-imposed heritage.

Architects Helle Juul and Flemming Frost (2011) define the performative space as a *space of activity,* contrasting with what they call *representational space.* They sum up further that "the performative accordingly consists of getting something to happen, of providing the occasion for something to occur" (Juul, 2011, p. 144). As a dynamic space of activity, opposing the static representational space, the performative space is thus characterised by providing occasions for activity—activity here also taking the form of active reflection.

This can be linked to some remarks about preservation and the negotiation of meaning intrinsic to this. The first one concerns the materiality and boundedness of heritage. As Smith notes, the AHD upholds itself by linking heritage to the authenticity of material and clear boundaries of sites or objects (Smith, 2006, p. 31). This reduces heritage to something that can be tamed, clearly defined, managed, and communicated. One way to provide a space for negotiation is to test the boundaries and authenticity of the fabric as a means to define the value. As the case study suggests, this testing can be done in a very physical way. Bungalow Germania points to how the partial replica of the Kanzlerbungalow is not about making a reconstruction in order to experience it as heritage. The testing of its boundaries by recontextualising it and letting it play a part in a montage provides for a situation in which the building has to perform new meaning.

The replica's relation to the original bungalow in Bonn becomes less important—what matters is the dialogue it enters into with the German Pavilion as its new context. Thus, challenging the physical boundaries of heritage can also challenge the boundaries of meaning ascribed. In this situation, the heritage moves from forming a space of representation to a space of activity, where new meaning is performed in a dialectical relationship between visitor and object. In short, it can be said that there are latent performative qualities in this act of uprooting.

The second remark concerns the notion of the passive versus active visitor. Smith also notes how the AHD is a mode that frames the visitor as passively receiving authorised meaning (Smith, 2006, p. 44). To communicate heritage as mere symbolic representations of identity "[...] draws on too narrow a sense of experience of what heritage is" (Smith, 2006, p. 30). If negotiation is desired, then the one experiencing the heritage has to be activated and encouraged to reflect. There are a lot of communication tools with which to do so, and these are often used in modern museum communication and the like. However, this might just be a different mode of communicating the same authorised narrative. Here, the examination of Bungalow Germania showed how the artistic practice of montage could provide room not for communication, but for actively sensing the buildings differently. It is through the bodily experience of materials and contexts clashing while walking through the room of Bungalow Germania that meaning both dissolves and occurs. Such use of artistic practice to reframe heritage activates the visitor in such a way that a phenomenological experience is called forth of the heritage object itself—an experience very valid in the negotiation of its meaning.

The last remark concerns an element of intervention as a way to bring forth performative qualities of a heritage object. Here, intervention can be understood broadly. A type of intervention could be to propose obsolete architecture or architecture in a liminal state as representative of national architecture. Bungalow Germania is both an answer to what "national architecture" looks like for Germany and, on a meta-level, is furthermore the representative work at the German Pavilion—a way of representing Germany abroad. It intervenes with the AHD and its more conventional choices of branding. Here, the choice can be said to become an intervention into the conventional. The performative qualities might seem more subtly provoked here. However, a certain element of *choosing object* has performative potential; namely when the choice plays with the expectations. The frictions occurring when expectations are not confirmed can thus be said to have a performative quality.

Artistic practice as critical preservation practice

The last observation is more of a concluding one and deserves the final attention. It also concerns the element of intervention in relation to preservation, but not as the one described above. It is the intervention into the object itself. The idea of intervention within conventional preservation often equals maintenance. In question here is the potential of interventions such as the play with boundaries, modification, recontextualisation, and contrasting. The artistic practice of montage is a certain kind of intervention, which in this case has proved able to produce meaning that exceeds both the representational ones of each building as well as the sum of the buildings together. As *artistic practice* cannot be standardised, this paper has not tried to define what *artistic practice* offers overall in relation to the preservation process. However, as artistic practices often frame materiality so as to produce added value and intangible qualities, it can be concluded that they are practices worth paying attention to when wanting to facilitate negotiation about meanings of heritage. What is now clear is how the artistic intervention into the heritage object provides an ambiguity for the interpretation of the object. Ambiguity in the meaning of the object is not inherently good, just as the heritage object as found is not. The quality of the ambiguity is the room it opens for critical thinking.

To talk of critical negotiation and preservation as the very same thing might, for some, be to stretch the concept of preservation. However, to talk of the exhibition of Bungalow Germania as a part of the preservation process of the buildings is to underline how the meaning negotiation attached to a building is a part of its preservation history. This way of thinking about preservation might especially prove itself productive when dealing with "difficult" or ideologically connoted heritage; in coming to terms with the past, either collectively or individually, active memory work needs to be done. As found in this paper, artistic practice and experimentation have the ability to activate reflection and memory work.

This conclusion points towards a related area, that of the public and civic negotiation of heritage as an alternative voice to the authorised discourse. However, an in-depth discussion of this topic is beyond the reach of this paper.

If critical thinking is the mode encouraged by Bungalow Germania, and possibly by artistic intervention in general, the exhibition must allow for a critical remark about itself. The limits of the space of heritage negotiation created through Bungalow Germania lie in the institutionalisation of the work itself. It is a work curated by experts, and highly visited by experts. This does not take away from the findings regarding the potential of artistic practice that were unveiled in this paper. The remark simply serves to show awareness of the limitations of artistic practice in certain contexts. Thus, if performed in public and in less restricted space, artistic practice as a process of preservation might avoid the pitfall of becoming self-referential and might facilitate an even more spacious room for the negotiation of heritage and its meanings—something to be tackled in a further study.

Conclusion

Through the artistic practice of montage, the Kanzlerbungalow and German Pavilion exceeded their representational meaning as historic and ideologically connoted architecture. This contests conventional preservation practice—identified as the *Authorised Heritage Discourse*—as it intervenes in the architecture in order to actively question its meaning rather than maintain it. The montage was a tool able to show the complicated link between material and the narrative. More than supporting or proposing a new narrative, the architectural montage was found to deconstruct the grand narratives implied in the architecture, leaving it up to the visitor to create new meaning. The case study's findings were reformulated through the concept of the performative, where three main strategies to negotiate heritage meaning were found: *uprooting* as a way to contest the link between material and meaning; encouragement to provide phenomenological experiences of heritage for the visitor; and lastly, intervention both through the choice of unexpected objects and intervention into the objects themselves. Lastly, it can be concluded that these are especially relevant strategies when discussing the preservation of political heritage, since they activate the memory work that is needed.

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Figures

Figure p.94: By Annalcontrario [CC BY-SA 3.0], via Wikimedia Commons < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Padiglione_Germania.jpg>

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Sara Akhlaq

From Church to Mosque to Museum

The influence of religious ideologies on the monument

Introduction

Hagia Sophia is an architectural masterpiece of the late sixth century that still remains standing today. It was built in Constantinople, present day Istanbul in Turkey. Throughout its existence, Hagia Sophia has been a visual testimony of political and social developments of the region. Built as a cathedral, it was transformed into a mosque in the thirteenth century after the conquest of the Ottoman Empire (Isaacs, 2011). Currently, Hagia Sophia is a museum that symbolises the secularity of the Turkish Republic. This monument has been appropriated by all ruling regimes to further their political and religious narratives, which has also lead to an assortment of conservation strategies. These conservation approaches have been diverse due to the differences in the religious and national ideologies of the ruling parties.

Hagia Sophia has layers upon layers of history, with each layer representing attributes of the concerned ruling parties. From the Byzantine Empire to the Ottoman Empire to the young Turkish Republic, the structure embodies the religious narratives of each of these ruling parties. In light of all the shifts of regimes that the region has been through, the subsequent effects on and alterations of Hagia Sophia have been a point of conflict between the Christians and Muslims of Turkey. As happens in most cases in which two religious communities have an affiliation to a single monument, a small population of both Muslims and Christians of the state claim Hagia Sophia to be a mosque and a

church, respectively, and refuse to conform to the secular ideologies espoused by the state. Lowenthal, in his book *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History,* perfectly sums up the role of heritage in these scenarios and how it steers the general public outlook:

> Heritage keeps outsiders at bay through claim of superiority that are unfathomable or offensive to others. Bonding within and exclusion beyond the group stem from faith, not reason: we exalt our own heritage not because it is demonstrably true but because it ought to be. (Lowenthal 1999, p.128)

Hagia Sophia's appropriation highlights the divisive character of cultural heritage, embodied in the way it has been conserved and treated as a central setting of the conflict between the Christian and Muslim communities of Turkey, which are both striving for equality. Hagia Sophia is again at a turning point in its history, as Tayyip Erdogan, the current prime minister of Turkey, expressed the desire in his early political career to convert Hagia Sophia into a mosque again (A Monumental Struggle to Preserve Hagia Sophia, 2017). This angered the Christian communities of Turkey, who had already expressed their dissatisfaction with the current ruling authority due to its biases against religious freedom. This decision, if given a go-ahead, will contradict the secular political ideologies that Turkey boasts. It will also affect not only the national situation, but also the international ties that Turkey has with its allies abroad.

Architectural significance of Hagia Sophia

Hagia Sophia is a prototype of the majestic Byzantine architecture, representing the value this empire placed on art and religion. For a monument of this proportion, the period of construction was incredibly short, lasting from 532 until 537 under the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010). The arduous task of designing the monument was undertaken by Anthemius and Isodore (V. Pentcheva, 2016). Having expertise in architecture as well as geometry, these two men managed to translate a dream into reality by designing a building that, for nearly a millennium, was considered the largest cathedral in the world. The temple, upon completion, was so richly and artistically decorated that Justinian, comparing it to Solomon's construction of first temple in Jerusalem, proclaimed, *"Solomon, I have outdone thee!"* (Jarus, 2013).

The most prominent central feature of Hagia Sophia is the massive dome, which is supported by four semi-circular arches arranged in a square. Being constructed as a cathedral, both the interior and exterior of Hagia Sophia revolved around symbolism associated with Christianity. The architecture and religious symbolism, however, went through various phases of modification with each ruling power.

Figure 1. *Exterior of Hagia Sophia Museum (Vågen 2013 / CC BY 3.0)*

When Hagia Sophia was constructed, its interior surfaces were covered with marble, murals, and golden mosaics of great artistic value. These golden mosaics, until today, are considered a primary feature of Byzantine Architecture and of the Hagia Sophia due to the elaborate details and the delicate choice of colour compositions. These mosaics covered various surfaces of the building, from the main entrance to a running mosaic in the upper gallery. The conservation measures taken for this feature of Hagia Sophia, in particular, have varied greatly with each ruling party. Each of the mosaics in Hagia Sophia has a unique significance and could be translated into a historical event pertaining to Christianity (Teteriatnikov, 1998). Hagia Sophia was designed to serve as an imperial monument. Having two floors, the upper story was designed in the form of a gallery from where the vast hall on the ground floor could be viewed. It is believed to have served as a seating place for imperial figures, from where they could witness the various important events that the building hosted during the Byzantine Empire.

The fact that Hagia Sophia has gone through some major transformations over time but still stands as an epitome of Byzantine Architecture due to its unique features further reinforces the grandness of its architecture. The monument has become a landmark of Turkey and is the chief component of the Istanbul skyline, with its massive dome and four minarets protruding towards the heavens above and looming over the city.

Conservation of Hagia Sophia and ideologies behind it during the Byzantine Empire

Hagia Sophia was a brainchild of Emperor Justinian of the Byzantine Empire. Justinian, during his 38-year-long reign, strived towards developing the region politically and religiously. He brought about tax reforms and also worked towards strengthening ties between religion and politics, as reflected in his empire's governmental framework. As usually happens, these developments faced harsh public opinions. In 532 AD, these ideological conflicts took the form of riots and lead to a famous uprising called the Nika riots (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010). These riots lead to extreme unrest, with more than half of the city burnt down and several people killed. The main purpose of these riots was to de-throne Justinian and to besiege him in his palace. During these riots, the basilica that previously stood on the location of Hagia Sophia was burnt down. To put an end to the riots, Justinian decided to declare his divine authority and to reaffirm to the public his political strength by building a magnificent church on the location of the fallen basilica. However, Justinian's decision to use the erection of a monument to re-establish his authority over his people was not unusual during that time. During the Byzantine era, emperors often employed the erection of majestic buildings and monuments to demonstrate their power.

Influence of iconoclasm on Hagia Sophia in the sixth and seventh centuries

During the initial period of its existence, decorations inside Hagia Sophia were kept very simple, with just the images of crosses on various surfaces and none of the mosaics that are now a primary feature of the structure. This was due to a religious ideology known as *Iconoclasm*, which opposes the veneration of Jesus Christ and other divine figures in human form. These mosaics were, however, added by succeeding emperors, the iconodules, who worshipped these images.

During the second quarter of the sixth century and the first quarter of seventh century, Constantinople experienced a rise in iconoclasm (En.wikipedia.org, 2017). The higher religious and political elites during these periods were against the representation of the divine figures in human form. This led to a huge iconoclastic movement all over the Byzantine Empire. Hagia Sophia, which was at the time filled with mosaics, was a primary target of this movement. Several of these mosaics were destroyed during that period. The imperial legislation also barred the production and use of these figural images. This was the first time since its construction that Hagia Sophia's physical fabric was affected by a religious ideology, but it was only the first in a series of incidents to follow.

Following the end of these two iconoclastic periods, the mosaics and figurines reappeared and accumulated in Hagia Sophia, with each ruling emperor moulding the interior according to his own religious and political ideologies.

Influence of Roman Catholicism on Hagia Sophia during the Fourth Crusade

Constantinople was captured during the fourth crusade from 1204 to 1261 (Isaacs, 2011). Hagia Sophia, under the Latin occupation of Constantinople, was ransacked and plundered. This ruling party, following the extensive history of appropriation of the monument by preceding ruling parties, converted Hagia Sophia into a Roman Catholic church (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010). The building was again used by a ruling party for propagating its religious ideologies by demonstrating the superiority of Catholic Rome over Orthodox Constantinople.

Upon the recapture of Constantinople by the Byzantine Empire in 1261, the status of Hagia Sophia was reversed to that of an Orthodox church. During that period, the church was in a dilapidated condition, indicating the lack of conservation measures employed by the previous ruling party. The Byzantine Empire, having been known for its acute acknowledgment of all factions of art, immediately dove into conservation efforts for the Hagia Sophia, which was entirely disregarded by the previous reign. The building continued flourishing as an Orthodox Christian church until the demise of the Byzantium reign in 1453.

Influence of religious ideologies on Hagia Sophia during the Ottoman Empire

The edifice that had been the flag bearer of the imperial majesty of the Byzantine Empire was almost immediately employed as a powerful political symbol by the Ottomans after they occupied Constantinople. When Sultan Mehmed II, the third in the Ottoman Empire lineage, took over Constantinople, he took various crucial steps to fulfil his forefathers' dream of transforming the Ottoman State into a world empire. To achieve his ultimate goal, the Emperor made Constantinople the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and consequently, Hagia Sophia was made the Grand Mosque of the new imperial capital (Isaacs, 2011). This step was also taken to proclaim the triumph of Islam over Christianity and to demonstrate the accession of the Ottoman Empire to the world. Characteristically, these sudden shifts were met with strong opposition from the Christian population of the new Ottoman Empire because in their point of view, Hagia Sophia could represent nothing but Christianity. Nevertheless, a series of additions, alterations, and conservation measures were carried out by Ottoman rulers. These advances varied with each Emperor, depending on their respective perception and interpretation of Islamic ideologies.

Upon the accession of the Ottoman Empire, consecutive sets of alterations were carried out on Hagia Sophia to convert the monument into a Grand Mosque.

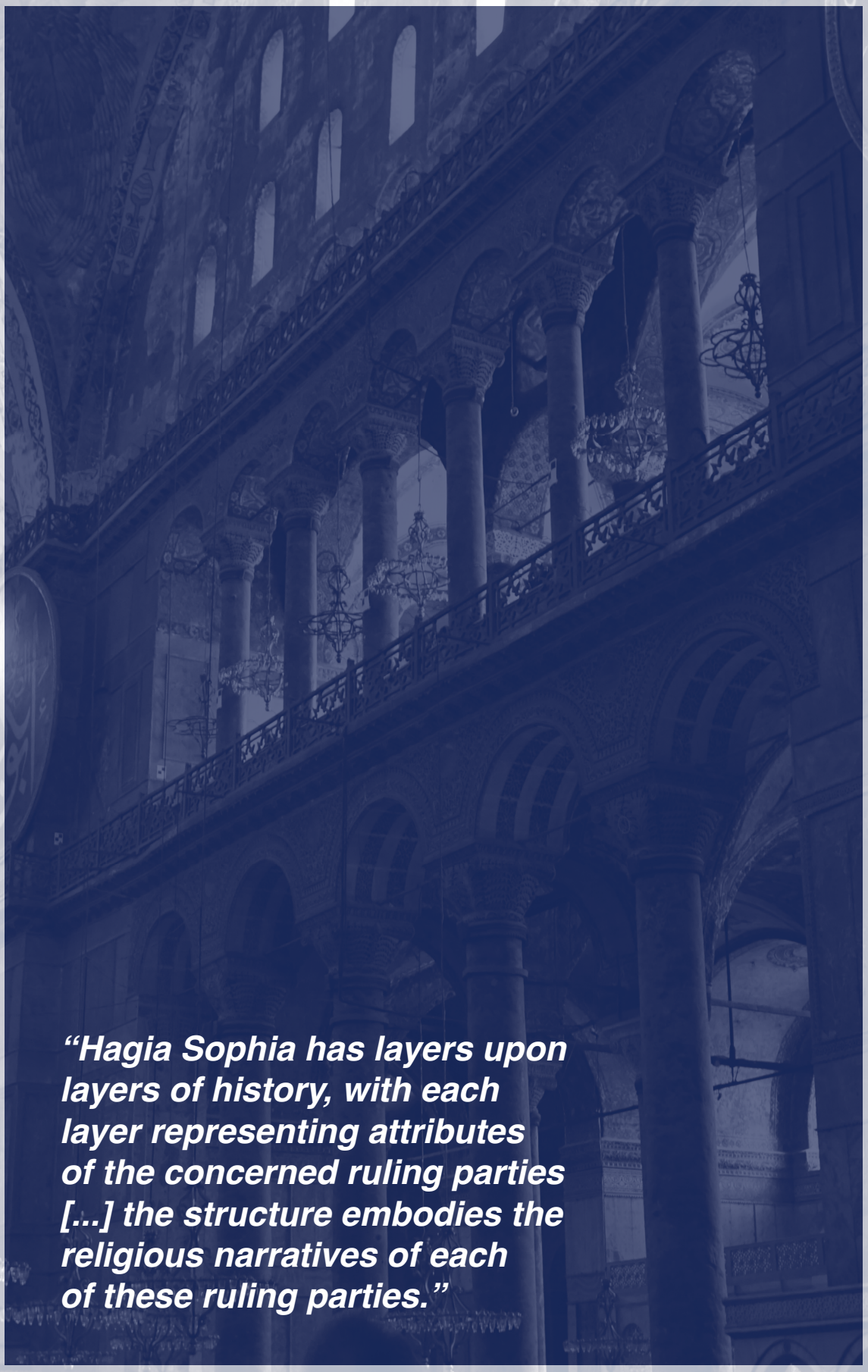
Alterations during the initial years of the Ottoman Empire

Upon conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, the Ottoman Empire modified the edifice and its interior in order to add the necessary features of a mosque. A mihrab was added, a necessary component of a mosque that signifies the direction of Mecca. There were minarets added to the exterior of Hagia Sophia, which signified that it was now a *Sultan Mosque.* Figure 1 illustrates the additions made to the façade, with the minarets protruding from four corners of the site (Fig, 1). Most of the symbols, imagery, and figures linked to Christianity were removed. The mosaics that constituted a primary feature of the interior of Hagia Sophia were left uncovered by Sultan Mehmet II, including the Virgin Mary and images of the seraphs, which he considered to be guardian spirits of the city. Bells and crosses were removed. The later sultans were, however, not this tolerant. Eventually, all of the mosaics inside the monument were plastered over, leaving just one uncovered (Jarus, 2013). A crescent took the place of the crucifix on the dome of Hagia Sophia. Sultan Mehmet II also established a *madrassa* inside the monument for the study of Muslim theology. With each succeeding Emperor, the Islamic symbolism continued to accumulate inside the monument, as well as in its immediate surroundings. The tombs of sultans Selim II, Murad III, and Mehmed III were also erected in the gardens of Hagia Sophia (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010). Regardless of the changes, the monument was recognised by the Ottoman dynasty for its timeless architecture and religious value. There were continuous measures taken to protect the monument that followed best conservation practices.

These alterations naturally did not sit well with the Christian population of not just the Ottoman Empire, but of surrounding regions as well, since for centuries it had held an axial position in Orthodox Christianity. The moment of the occupation of Hagia Sophia was chronicled and recalled in gory details. Roger Crowley, in his book 1453: *The Holy War for Constantinople and the Clash of Islam and the West*, describes it as:

> The church was meant to embody heaven on earth, and here were these aliens in turbans and robes, smashing tombs, scattering bones, hacking up icons for their golden frames. Imagine appalling mayhem, screaming wives being ripped from the arms of their husbands, children torn from parents, and then chained and sold into slavery. For the Byzantines, it was the end of the world. (2006, p.81)

Various myths and legends went on to be associated with the occupation of Hagia Sophia as well. Many clung to the fiction tale of the worshipping priests disappearing into the walls of Hagia Sophia and would someday reappear to end resurrect the lost glory of the Greek empire (Gamm, 2014).



(mkline55, 2013) Creative Commons

"Hagia Sophia has layers upon layers of history, with each layer representing attributes of the concerned ruling parties [...] the structure embodies the religious narratives of each of these ruling parties."

Impact of *Westernisation* on Hagia Sophia

In the mid-nineteenth century, Hagia Sophia was again swept up in a new wave of ideological transformation. Europe was in the process of rapid modernisation from the start of the eighteenth century and, likewise, the Empire, in its attempt towards *Westernisation,* was also trying to cope with it (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010). This process was adopted by the state organisation and was later adopted by the general public into their social lives in the nineteenth century. The Ottoman Emperor Abdülmecid is particularly known for the high regard in which he held the new Western way that was prevalent in Europe during his reign. He put forth a Tanzimat Fermanı [Edict of Reforms] in 1839, according to which the empire would proceed towards acquiring the status of a Westernising state (Isaacs, 2011). This was followed by an increase in the rights of non-Muslims in the Empire. These reforms in the organisational structure also triggered revolutions in the societal framework, accompanied by new interpretations of religious and cultural sites. These changes led to a different approach being used for the restoration and repair of Hagia Sophia. These conservation measures were commissioned by Abdulmücid and executed by two Swiss architects. During these repairs, the covered mosaics were accidentally discovered. The Sultan was awed by the mosaics and, appreciating their significance, he ordered their repair. It was, however, not possible to keep any type of figurine exposed inside a mosque under Islamic ideology, so the Sultan ordered the mosaics to be covered with utmost care after their complete restoration and conservation.

The ideological impacts of the Ottoman Empire on Hagia Sophia were significant, but its artistic and sublime values were well recognised by the dynasty, and the Ottomans further enhanced the attributes of this majestic monument. However, the fact still remains that it was an Orthodox church first, and it is still considered a church and a place of worship by Turkish Christians.

Hagia Sophia under the secular Turkish Republic

Adhan—the Muslim call to prayer—resounded from the four minarets of Hagia Sophia from the time the structure was declared the Grand Mosque up until 1934. However, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the modern Turkish Republic came into being. In 1934, Turkey's first president, Kemal Atatürk, secularised the country and converted Hagia Sophia into a museum. Thus, it became the first building to be converted into a museum from a mosque. The transformation lead to a reformed way of conserving Hagia Sophia. Under the direct order of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the authorities, in cooperation with the Byzantine Institute of America, carried out extensive conservation initiatives, uncovering the well-known mosaics and creating a space that represented the coexistence of Islam and Christianity. Thus, the space propagated secularism, with both Islamic calligraphy and Christian figurines equally represented. These reforms were lauded within both

national and international spheres and were time and again brought into the limelight by the print media. *The New York Times* (1932) published an article named *Mosaics Uncovered in Famous Mosque,* which stated:

> Byzantine treasures long hidden in Saint Sophia stripped of plaster covering. Some Moslems object. Turkish Government, however, is cooperating in work with American Institute. The more liberal views now taken by Turkey's rulers in all matters pertaining to religion will surely encourage others to help regardless of race or creed. (Katipoğlu & Caner-Yüksel, 2010, p.212)

The unveiling of the mosaics in Hagia Sophia caused an outpouring of appreciation from all over the world. These measures were brought to fruition by the secular ideologies of the young republic. The Hagia Sophia museum no longer represented the superiority of Islam over Christianity or Christianity over Islam, but it rather took a stance of equality. It was neither an imperial church nor a grand mosque; it was a secular monument of a secular state where all religions and cultures gathered under one vast dome of science. The interior of Hagia Sophia propagates and boasts religious symbologies of both Islam and Christianity (Fig 2). Figure 2 shows Islamic calligraphy and mosaics pertaining to Christianity existing in harmony. Hagia Sophia became a visual testimony to the secular and modern discourse of Turkey. It promoted the ideology of secularism, not just in state affairs but also in all dimensions of the society. It exemplified a nuanced approach towards cultural heritage sites while strengthening the national ideologies.

The conservation strategies in Hagia Sophia complied with the secular ideologies of the Turkish Republic. It propagated the idea of a place that represented religious impartiality. The mosaics and symbols pertaining to Christianity that had been added to the interior of Hagia Sophia and subsequently covered under Islamic jurisdiction were uncovered and preserved, and they thus became significant aesthetic features of the Hagia Sophia Museum. By treading on the strategies favoured by preceding religious ruling parties, Hagia Sophia was used as a symbolic vehicle for the authorities' ideological propagations for the public.

Hagia Sophia during the current ideological war in Turkey

The treatment of Hagia Sophia by ruling authorities has always embodied how said authorities envision the historical and religious values of the monument. Although Hagia Sophia was declared a museum, rendering it neither a church nor a mosque, this decision did not satisfy some sections of the Christian and Muslim communities. A small portion of both religious groups refused to accept the structure's secular status, and ever since then, Hagia Sophia has been subjected to an ideological tug-of-war. Neither side wants to accept the idea of a shared religious place. Robert Ousterhout (2017), a historian at the University of Pennsylvania who has been working on Byzantine sites in Turkey since

Figure 2. *Interior of Hagia Sophia with Islamic and Christian symbols (Day 2011 / CC BY 2.0).*

the 1980s, points out that:

> The building has always been treated in a symbolic way—by Christians, Muslims, and by Ataturk and his secular followers, each group looks at Hagia Sophia and sees a totally different building.

Ever since the designation of Hagia Sophia as a museum, performing prayer inside the monument has been banned. Nevertheless, small sections of the population, under the influence of extreme religious ideologies, are bent on reclaiming it as part of their respective faiths. On the other hand, there is also a huge part of the population that is holding firm in the belief that the monument should be retained as a national symbol of impartiality and secularism. Today, the current political authorities in Turkey are providing a favorable environment for the demands of Muslims who are following extreme ideologies. Re-consecration of Hagia Sophia as a mosque was a desire once expressed by Turkey's current Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the 1990s when he was still climbing up the political ladder. This caused a rising concern among secularists, because this desire was accompanied by a declaration of his support for integrating Islamic law into the legislative structure. Erdogan was elected prime minister in 2003 and was then re-elected with an overpowering majority in 2007. He has since shed his past rhetoric regarding Hagia Sophia and has taken a moderate approach, supporting secularism and keeping religion and politics separate. However, this approach still does not satisfy secularists due to the shifting of social ideologies towards extreme Islamic principles. Ousterhout's take on the matter is that:

> Hagia Sophia is a pawn in the game of intrigue between the secular and religious parties. There's an alarmist response on both sides. They always assume the worst of each other. Secularists fear that religious groups are part of a conspiracy funded from Saudi Arabia, while religious people fear that the secularists want to take their mosques away from them. (Ousterhout, 2017)

A new turn of events came about in 2016, when an Imam was appointed for Hagia Sophia by the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs (Catholic Herald, 2016). This was followed by a call to prayer being chanted from the minarets of Hagia Sophia for the first time since 1935. Although it is still a museum, the dominating and enhanced Islamic traits of the monument has put a damper on the secular characteristics that have been associated with it for decades. The situation has only persisted since then, with the secular ideologies of Hagia Sophia being sidelined and the Islamic attributes of the monument being conserved and augmented.

Impact of culture and religion as ideologies on Hagia Sophia

Hagia Sophia has been a visual testimony of Turkey in political, cultural, and religious contexts throughout the 1400 years that is has existed. The religious ideologies of each ruling authority could be understood from the way Hagia Sophia was treated during that particular era. The overall treatment of and conservation strategies used for Hagia Sophia could be linked directly to the shifting cultural and religious frameworks of the region. This cultural shuffle, in turn, was immensely affected by the dominating religions during each period. Assessing the conservation strategies from the beginning, during the time of its construction, Constantinople had a ruling authority that strictly followed the tenets of Orthodox Christianity. This religious interest led to an inclination towards architectural features that were in accordance with religious beliefs. This meant that initially, the mosaics did not include any images or caricatures. However, as time passed, the bias towards orthodoxy and conservative religious ideologies gradually reduced and these features began to be added. During the iconoclastic period, Hagia Sophia saw a diverse and rather pernicious handling of its celebrated mosaics. However, these mosaics grew in number as time passed and the Byzantine Empire continued its rule over the region. The conservation of Hagia Sophia and its architectural features varied under different emperors, with each authority adding elements to the interior according to their own will. All of these additions could be linked to one religious ideology or the other.

The same practice flowed into the cultural ideologies that existed under the Ottoman rule, during which religion steered every aspect of social and political situations. The cultural framework of the region took a turn with the new ruling authority, as Islamic culture gradually became an essential part of society. This change also affected Hagia Sophia. The additions made to Hagia Sophia under Ottoman rule conformed to Islamic

ideologies, which could be ascertained by the addition of minarets to the monument, new Islamic calligraphic interior design, the covering of mosaics, and several other features. As the culture of Constantinople became more Islamic, the shift affected Hagia Sophia immensely. The conservation strategies were more concentrated on the Islamic features of the building and less on those connected to the pre-Ottoman period. There were, however, a few exceptions, one of which occurred during the reign of the Ottoman Emperor Abdülmecid. Abdülmecid introduced the ideology of *Westernisation* to the region and consequently took it on a more modern course in which the rights of minority groups were enhanced. This was reflected in the conservation strategies for Hagia Sophia, and it led to the uncovering of mosaics that pertained to Christianity and the pre-Ottoman ruling party.

The current cultural and political unrest is also reflected directly in Hagia Sophia, as protests keep erupting amongst Muslims and Christians regarding what religion Hagia Sophia represents. Both groups refuse to accept the secular status of the monument. There is an absolute disregard of the fact that Hagia Sophia has layer upon layer of history and that labelling it as a monument to a particular religion or group only serves to limit its universal value.

Diversity in religious ideology as a dialogical resource

Since the period of the Byzantine Empire, the region of modern-day Turkey has been directly impacted by religious ideologies. Due to shifts in the religious ideologies of the ruling parties, the dominant and minority communities have varied. In the past, the dominant group was Christian, while in present times the Muslims hold majority status. In any region of the world where multiple cultural or religious groups share the same space and claim citizenship of the same region, these conflicts regarding inequality always arise. One of the reasons could be the fact that although the official framework is not partial to any particular group, the minority group will still have fewer rights due to some aspects of the social framework that remain unaffected by the official framework. Ideological diversity could be interpreted in two ways with regard to the impact it has on the social framework of a nation or the people that associate with it. It could bring the society together into one tight group, thus reducing intolerance among people. The flip side is what has been described in the case of Hagia Sophia: a cultural monument with which two religious groups affiliate has been made into an ideological battleground, a space over which both Muslims and Christians want to have complete control. Lowenthal, in his book *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History,* aptly sums this up as follows:

> Heritage reverts to tribal rules that makes each past an exclusive, secret possession. Created to generate and protect group interests, its benefits us only if withheld from others. Sharing or even showing legacy to outsiders vitiates its virtue and power. (1999, p.128)

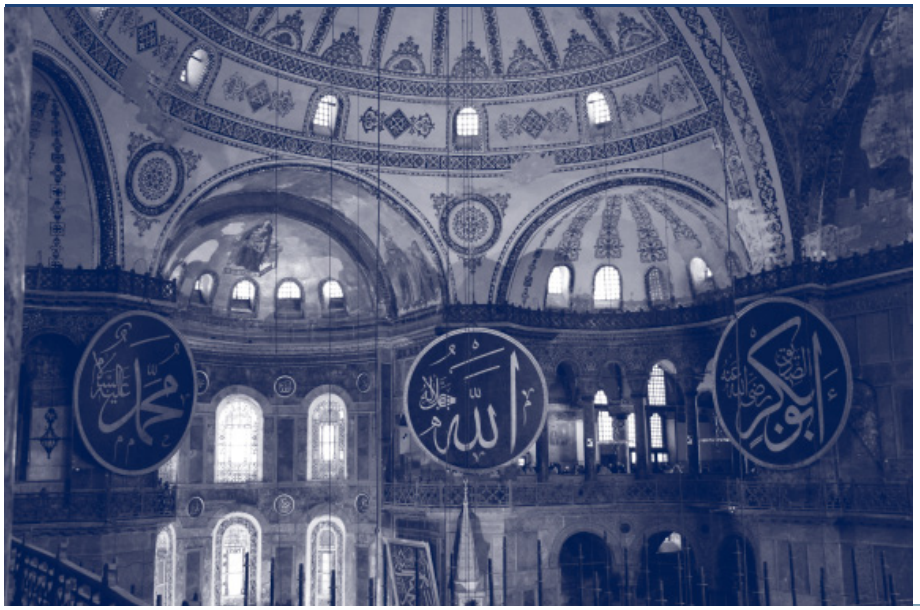


Figure 3. *Interior of Hagia Sophia with Islamic and Christian symbols (Rabe! 2013,* CC BY-SA 3.0*)*

Rather than being a central source of conflict, religious ideologies could be moulded into a dialogical resource that could be used to initiate a peaceful discourse among the clashing communities. Hagia Sophia, which is currently one of the main sources of conflict for the religious groups, could instead be interpreted in a way that creates a sense of equality based on the secular ideologies. Rather than creating conflict among the religious groups on the basis of religious differences, diversity in ideologies should be the ground upon which groups unite and engage in a healthy discussion.

Conclusion

> *Peace cannot be achieved through violence; it can only be attained through understanding.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

Cultural monuments could play a primary role in peacebuilding. Ideological and cultural diversity often elicits a sense of fear in people, a fear of something alien. Culture, being a source of identity, could be used to minimise friction between and among different sections of a multicultural society. Hagia Sophia, which has evoked a sense of belonging for two major religions of the world, has always been a point of conflict. All ruling parties have expressed their inclination towards a particular religion by conserving or enhancing features related to that religion while ignoring attributes pertaining to the other. Within the current political and religious ideologies of the Turkish Republic, secularism is claimed to be a primary attribute. However, the ideology of secularism needs to be further emphasised in the case of Hagia

Sophia. The current Muslim ruling authority has shown an inclination towards converting the monument to a Mosque. This step, if taken, would alienate a major part of the population of a country that has already shown its dissatisfaction with the impartiality of the government. This act of overshadowing one aspect of a monument in favor of another, equally important feature is called the "dominant ideology thesis" in J.E Tunbridge's book, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (1997, p. 47). Tunbridge further explains that:

> Heritage interpretation is endowed with messages which are deliberately framed by an existing or aspirant power elite to legitimize and existing dominant regime, or alternatively are developed by an opposition group with the objective of overthrowing the competitor. (1997, p. 47)

The peacebuilding role of Hagia Sophia can only be fulfilled when it represents the whole population of the country and binds the people together under the flag of a shared and inclusive culture.

In all multicultural societies, the minority communities play a pivotal role, and the Christian population of Turkey is no exception. Not tackling the delicate situation of the Hagia Sophia in a thoughtful, appropriate manner could lead to the monument losing its universal value. Human beings are bound to fear what they don't understand, but these apprehensions can be overcome by propagating the ideology of unity in diversity. Such unity could be accomplished by creating a shared space within a monument, in this case Hagia Sophia, that all citizens can connect with, irrespective of their religious identity. This cultural interchange and ideological reconciliation would be even more significant in light of the current political turbulence in Turkey and the rise of religious extremism in the region. The revolutionary secular ideologies promoted by Kemal Ataturk need to be applied in full form by the current government. This would include condemning all factions of the social framework that show an inclination towards converting the monument into a mosque. Only then would Hagia Sophia stand as an emblem of a secular country.

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Figures

Figure 1: By Arild Vågen [CC BY 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Mars_2013.jpg>

Figure 2: By Michael Day [CC BY 2.0], via Wikimedia Commons < https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/66/Hagia_Sophia_interior_%286648803923%29.jpg>

Figure 3 : By Rabe! [CC BY-SA 3.0], via Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_-_Muhammad,_Allah,_Abu_Bakr.jpg>

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(Heimrāte, 2017)

Mare Heimrāte

The Corner House Revisited

The future perspectives of uncomfortable heritage

There are numerous historical sites or monuments all over the world that deal with somber heritage left by various ideological movements. Initially, there were different approaches for dealing with these particular relics, depending on the viewpoint of the specific actors involved, as well as on factors related to the cultural, economic, or symbolic values of such relics. This paper will deal with the site named The Corner House (Latvian - Stūra māja) and will address the following pressing questions: What are the future perspectives of the Corner House as a site or monument of remembrance, and what are the best possible solutions for maintaining it?

The Corner House (Fig.1) is one of Latvia's cultural monuments of historical significance and is located in Riga's center, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The six-story Neo-classical house complex was built in 1912 by the architect Aleksandrs Vanags (1873 - 1919) (OMB, 2016). The site is known by numerous names, including Teter's house, the Corner House, Cheka House, and the KGB house. The most commonly used nickname, the Corner House, comes from the Soviet era, when the building was used by the secret state police of the former Soviet Republic. People would come to the Corner House to make accusations against those who allegedly committed treasonous acts. The entrance of the building was located right at the corner of two streets (Long, 2014).

The house was originally designed as a residential apartment building with exclusive shops and offices on the ground floor gallery (Fig. 2). During its more than one hundred years of

history, the building's interior has changed drastically, but the exterior has remained largely the same. In the early 1930s, when the building housed the Latvian Interior Ministry, the ground floor gallery row was changed to a row of windows with grills. However, the biggest change the building experienced was during the Soviet occupation, when it was rebuilt for the needs of the State Security Committee (KGB). An internal prison was constructed on the ground floor and in the basement, along with a shooting range, detention cells, interrogation rooms, and the unsettling exercise yard (Cielava, 2015).

In just over a century of existence, the house has experienced major changes to its physical fabric and so much more. The building witnessed and played a part in major ideological movements, and it holds symbolic meanings for various stakeholders and inhabitants. Moreover, the building has housed key political players of different historical periods, and it "became the most vivid symbol of the totalitarian regime during five decades of Latvia's occupation" (Galfy, 2016).

Thus, since 2014, starting as a project of "Riga – The European Capital of Culture 2014", the Corner House has hosted several historical exhibitions. As these projects are supposed to terminate at the end of 2017, there is a deep uncertainty as to what will happen with the monument in the future. Recently, the city government reconstructed the facade and roof in anticipation of a future owner or new inhabitants. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding the future of the house. There haven't been enough debates on to what extent it is necessary to preserve (or not) the Corner House as a site or monument of remembrance. Additionally, there should be more discussions involving different actors on how to preserve a monument with a dark history that also honours the memory of people subjected to Soviet repression. Consequently, the following text deals with the future perspectives of the Corner House as a site or monument of remembrance and with the solutions for conserving it.

This paper will discuss an urgent case of a historic monument and its future, examining the political and cultural history of the building, as well as the various actors' opinions on the site's maintenance. The paper builds off of the theories of the historian David Lowenthal and the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, as well as relevant documents, such as the Occupation Museum Association of Latvia's resolution on preserving the testimony and memorial of the former Cheka's house as authentic historical evidence and the Faro Convention. Taking into account the debates held about the Corner House, it will reveal two opposing opinions about the future of the monument.

The political and cultural history of the Corner House

In order to examine the situation today and discuss the several opinions about the future perspectives of the building, it is important to first analyse the monument's political and cultural history, which can be divided into four periods.

TIME LINE	Before World War	Independent Latvia	Occupation Regimes			The Independent Republic of Latvia		
			Soviet	German	Soviet			
	I		II			III		IV
	1910	1920 - 1930	1940 - 1941	1941 – 1944/45	1944/45 -1991	1991- 2008	2008 - 2014	2014 – 2017 --->???
Interior	A tenement house; Exclusive shops; Department of Imperial Russian Music School; Architect's Aleksandrs Vanags Office	Ministry of Finances; Ministry of the Interior; Book store; Library; The Latvian Border Guard	Committee for State Security or KGB	Art and Public Affairs Department; Youth organiza-tions	Committee for State Security or KGB	Latvian State Police	SIA "Valsts Nekustamie Īpašumi" – The State Real Estate	The Project started by the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia (Private Organisation
Exterior	The façade and interior completed in 1912	The first floor galleries changed to windows with grills	The construction of an internal prison on the ground floor and basement, as well as a shooting range, detention cells, Interrogation rooms, the unsettling exercise yard etc.			Minor renovation of the upper floors	Abandoned	Renovation of the façade and the roof

During the first period from 1910/12 to 1939, the building served different functions as a tenement house, a location of the Imperial Russian Music School, the Ministry of Finances, the Ministry of the Interior, the main office of the Latvian Border Guard. It was a complex time in the history of the nation-state, including the years of the First World War, but during these almost three decades, the building complex was a symbol of the well-being of the society, as it was situated in the social and economic heart of the city (Rumbiņa, 2014).

The second period from 1940 to 1991 marks the time of the three occupations of Latvia—the Soviet, Nazi, and Soviet again. Already in the beginning of 1940s, the Secret Soviet State Police took over the building and turned it into a KGB headquarters. During this period, people who were against the totalitarian regime were tortured and executed in different parts of the house. The former meaning of the house, therefore, changed from a symbol of well-being into a symbol of torture (Galfy, 2016).

The third period from 1991 to 2014 started with the restoration of the independent Republic of Latvia. In the beginning of 1990s, the Latvian State police took over the building and stayed until 2008, afterwhich the building was left completely abandoned for several years (Rumbiņa, 2014). Nevertheless, the house did not remain in total oblivion. There were continuous discussions between different stakeholders on the future of the complex. 2008 was also the year of the preparation of the Occupation Museum Association of Latvia's resolution on the former KGB house as authentic historical evidence and commemoration.

Figure 1. *The Corner House after the reconstruction of the façade. (Heimrāte, 2017)*

Initially, the fourth period starting from the year 2014 marked the revitalisation of the site (Odyssay, 2014). In this period, the government revealed the monument's history to the public. According to the project of "Riga – European Capital of Culture 2014", various exhibitions and guided tours related to the history of the house were organised in the building, opening the dialogue between the society and authorities, the past and the present (Long, 2014). Although the exhibition projects guided by the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia were so successful and the term of the project was extended until the end of 2017, there is still a great uncertainty about the future of the building, mainly because of economic circumstances.

Taking into consideration actors from different fields, the questions of the future perspectives of the Corner House as a site or monument of remembrance and the solutions for conserving it are rising anew. Furthermore, there is not a clear future management plan for the site, which is why the debates are urgent and pressing. Despite the successful museum and educational exhibition project (and the extention of the exhibition until the end of 2017), the future of the house is not yet set in stone.

Actors and their opinions

There are several actors and stakeholders involved in the debates about the future perspectives of the Corner House. The biggest challenge is to bring the complex out of obscurity and try to find a solution that harnesses its economic, social, and symbolic potentials.

However, while analysing the discussions about the future of the site, two opposing parties become apparent: the State Joint Stock Company State Real Estate and the Occupation Museum Association of Latvia. These two actors and their supporters have opinions based on the financial and ideological situation of this Latvian state cultural monument of historical significance. When the "Riga – European Capital of Culture 2014" project ended in October 2014, there were already wide discussions about the future of the site. The actors involved were academics, historians, experts in cultural heritage, architects, artists, entrepreneurs, and students, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Culture and the State Joint Stock Company State Real Estate. The opinions varied according to the symbolic meaning attributed to the building, as well as the economic and aesthetic values.

In the past few years, the State Joint Stock Company State Real Estate has invested thousands of euros trying to improve the market value of the Corner House and attract potential tenants. The renovation of the building's facade was meant to maintain the authentic view of the building's early appearance and to "enhance the architectural attractiveness of the urban environment, as well as to bring the economic value of the real estate market" (Cielava, 2015). The primary idea was to rent out the six floors of Teter's house for bureaucratic purposes. The rental offers have already been made both to state institutions and to Latvian and foreign entrepreneurs. The possibility of adapting Teter's house into a residential building has also been considered. Reconstructing the house in 2015 and painting it white based on the original vision of architect Aleksandrs Vanags can also be seen as an attempt to revert the house's ideological and symbolic meanings. Additionally, there is an attempt to change the popular nickname from the Corner House to Teter's House (which was the name of the building's tenants in the early-twentieth century). However, there have been no responses from potential tenants (Cielava, 2015). Consequently, none of the state institutions have shown interest in moving into the Corner House and helping to realise the idea of filling the house with offices and stores. In the opinion of the State Real Estate, the financial situation does not allow for keeping the Corner House as a museum, as they argue that the total reconstruction could cost millions of euros. Even just maintaining the building would cost additional money every year. In the opinion of Edgar's Šīns (Chairman of the Latvian Real Estate Association and Chairman of the Board of the Real Estate Company Latio):

> It would be more convenient to use the funds to organize already existing museums and to hire already recruited people in culture sphere. The market over time (within 5-10 years) will find a rational use for this property. (Kaže-Zumberga, 2014)

The Museum of the Occupation of Latvia, which played a significant role in occupying the building in 2014 and turning it into a platform for discussions, has an opposing opinion to the State Joint Stock Company State Real Estate. As already mentioned, the "Riga – European Capital of Culture 2014" project *Corner House. Case No. 1914/2014* was

one of the most successful events, and it started broad debates between the society and the authorities regarding the past and the future. Following this success, the Ministry of Culture expressed the wish to leave the exhibitions by the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia on the first two floors of the building and to extend the project cycle. Many authorities have changed their opinion towards supporting the idea of keeping the original building as a museum or a center for historical education and developing projects on the house's history. There are many who support the idea to preserve the status of a publicly accessible building that is filled with cultural and historical content like exhibitions and educational tours.

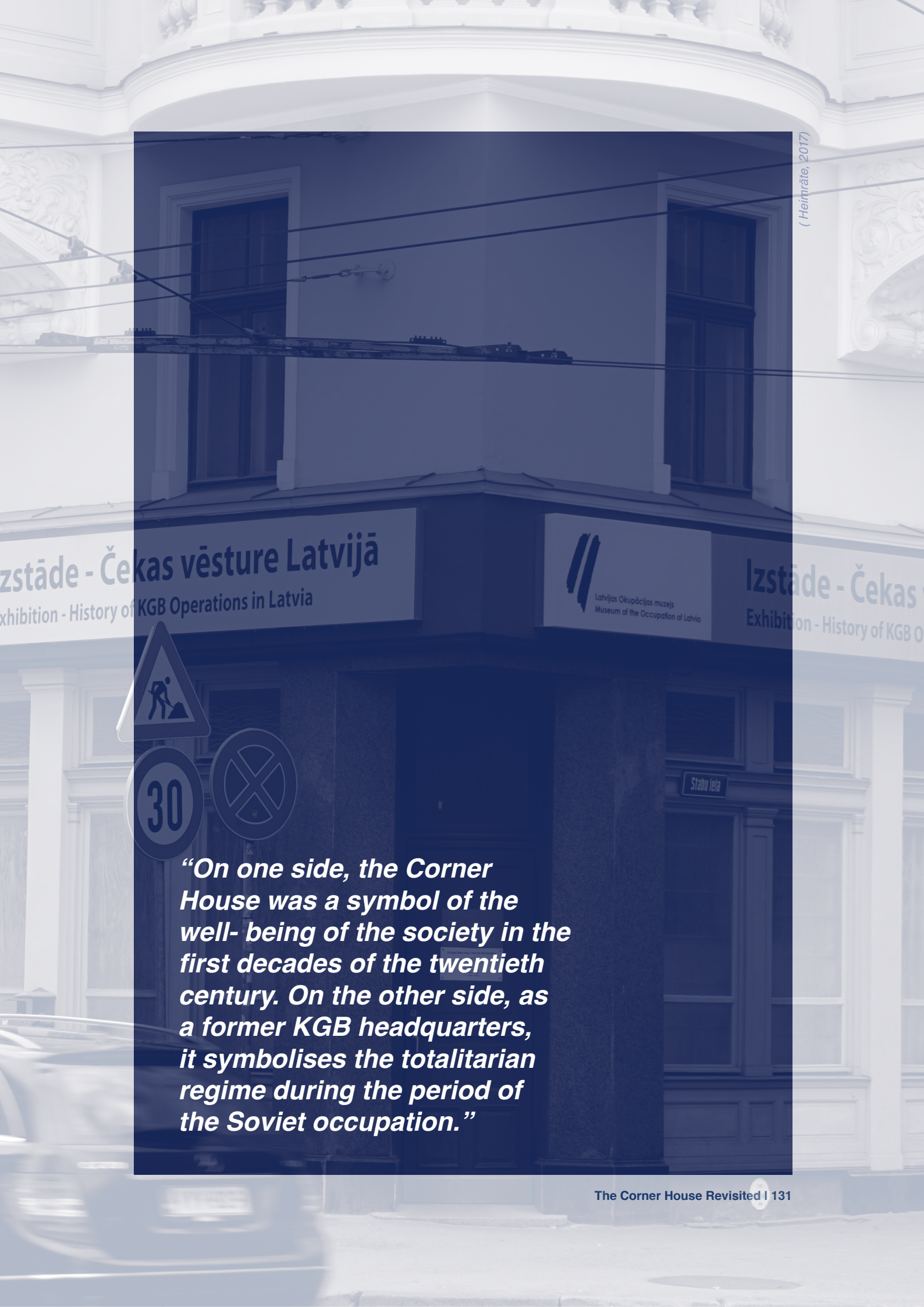
Uwe Hillmer, the Director of the Stasi Museum in Berlin, explained the following about the future of the Corner House: "It is a place for youth education; it is a place for history" (Kas notiks ar stūra māju?, 2014). The idea that the Corner House should stay as a museum and "repository of the society's memory" is a central idea of Kaže- Zumberga's interviews in 2014 about the future of the house with several authorities in Latvia representing various actors. Writer and publicist Marina Kosteņecka reminds us that the house:

> is a record of the past and should generate the past events to the younger generation reminding the nation's history. This house is a vivid relict of the past and can attract more and give more unforgettable experience than reading books or watching a film about the totalitarian regime. The most necessary are to preserve the guided tours which outweigh any cinema séance. (Kaže-Zumberga 2014)

In the opinion of the politician and former Latvian Minister of Culture Ints Dālderis, all the memorials and projects associated with the occupation of Latvia and resistance movements should be situated right in the Corner House (Kaže-Zumberga 2014). The architect Pēteris Blūms also supports the argument of keeping the building for museum purposes:

> The building cannot be blamed for the fate of the people. There are thousands of buildings built above the graves; people live in former churches, prisons, fortresses. There are many ways to deal with old maladaptation: one version - ignore, allow the testimony to shed; The second way is to paint it black and regularly remind yourself of old pain, pouring ashes into the hair; The third option is to paint the house white and say that no night, even a night of horror, can be darker than dawn. The Riga Corner House is a house that warns about the dangers of short historical memory. In fact, the Occupation Museum's place is in the Corner House, because there are the occupying power and our fears. And this is the place to talk about truths and the right to be true. (Kaže-Zumberga 2014)

Interestingly, architect Kristaps Ģelzis has a vision that consolidates the ideas of both parties—The State Real Estate and the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia. His idea is that the first floor and basement should remain as a museum, but the upper floors should be filled with various public organisations whose content and work are appropriate to the historical context of the home. The second suggested version is to cut the house in half:



(Heimrāte, 2017)

"On one side, the Corner House was a symbol of the well- being of the society in the first decades of the twentieth century. On the other side, as a former KGB headquarters, it symbolises the totalitarian regime during the period of the Soviet occupation."

> The bottom floor should be blocked with a concrete, so it could divide Corner House emotionally in two parts - the history stays down like a silent monument, but at the top, there is a hotel. (Kaže-Zumberga 2014)

Another idea of Kristaps Ģelzis was to paint the house black, so that the grand black mass on the corner of Stabu and Brīvības Street would never allow anyone to forget the events of recent history:

> I like the idea of painting the house black, which is the vision of architect Kristaps Ģelzis. However it would be necessary to leave the cameras and the execution rooms how they are, which is 10% of the entire house, entrepreneur, real estate developer. (Kas notiks ar stūra māju, 2014)

The Occupation Museum Association of Latvia's resolution and the Faro Convention

It is important to also take into account the opinions of locals in order to have an open, democratic discussion about the house's future. For this, it is necessary to refer to central aspects of the Faro Convention (*Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*). As the aim of the convention is to strengthen civil society and democracy by emphasising every person's right to engage with the cultural heritage of their choice, it is necessary to discuss its advantages. Furthermore, the convention encourages communities to work together for the good of their shared cultural heritage (CETS No. 199, 2005). Latvia joined this convention in 2006. For developing a future management plan for the Corner House, there are several important messages in the convention that should be taken into consideration. For example:

> The Parties to this Convention agree to: recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage; emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal (CETS 199, Section 1, Article 1, 2).

According to the convention, "The Parties recognize that: everyone, alone or collectively, has the right to benefit from the cultural heritage and to contribute towards its enrichment" (CETS 199, Section 1, Article 4, 2). Additionally, after the Faro Convention:

> The Parties undertake to: recognise the public interest associated with elements of the cultural heritage in accordance with their importance to society; enhance the value of the cultural heritage through its identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation; foster an economic and social climate which supports participation in cultural heritage activities; promote cultural heritage protection as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity (CETS 199, Section 1, Article 5, 3).

Figure 2. *Postcard of the Teter's House from the first decades of 20th century (Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka/ PD).*

In discussing the future perspectives of the Corner House, the Occupation Museum Association of Latvia's resolution on the former KGB house as authentic historical evidence and commemoration should also be taken into consideration. In the 2008 meeting of the museums association, the members agreed that before the State Real Estate takes over the building, it is necessary for the Latvian state institutions to take responsibility for the building's future conditions, which means:

> Careful research and documentation of the architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic and engineering works of the building before the restoration or reconstruction of the building; maintenance of authentic testimonies in the building; an opportunity for the public to get acquainted with evidence of the activities of USSR repressive institutions throughout the Soviet Union's occupation; the opportunity for the public and, in particular, the victims of the USSR repression to express their plans for further use of the building'. (LOM Resolution 2008)

The Occupation Museum has fulfilled the conditions put forth in the resolution, which includes the development of the interior into an exhibition area for educational purposes, as well as the "development of a concept for a permanent exhibition in the historical part of the building with its historical materials and experience" (Latvijas Okupācijas muzeja biedrības rezolūcija par bijušā Čekas nama kā autentiskas vēstures liecības un piemiņas saglabāšanu, 2008).

The resolution was submitted to the President of Latvia, the Culture and Science Commission, the government, the Ministry of Culture, the State Inspection on Heritage Protection, the Latvian Political Repressed Association, the Riga Political Repression Society, the

Latvian UNESCO Commission, and other interested parties, as well as to the media. The resolution states that it is totally unacceptable that the building could lose its testimony value, which is so obvious in the interior, cellars, and courtyards.

The theoretical framework

Starting from broader concepts, it is first necessary to clarify the theories of Ideology and Symbolism in the context of the site. Clifford Geertz's *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) serves as one of the main references. The problem of Ideology and Symbolism arises when different meanings can be declared through one symbol. The symbols are variable: they stand for several meanings, which may be complementary but also repeated. The problem is due to a variety of meanings or one overwhelmingly strong meaning that has even left a mark in the history of a particular time period of the nation-state. Going through the different periods of the Corner House's history, two particular time periods are revealed to be remarkable, as they show contradicting meanings of this heritage. On one side, the Corner House was a symbol of the well-being of the society in the first decades of twentieth century. On the other side, the building symbolises the repression of the totalitarian regime during the period of the Soviet occupation.

The recent reconstruction of the house in 2015, and the painting of the house in white in accordance with the original vision of the architect Aleksandrs Vanags, is an attempt to revert the house's symbolic meaning for society and to attract future tenants. The symbolic conversion of the meaning of the house also becomes clear in the attempt to rename the Corner House to Teter's House, which was the name of the first building's customers and also the first name of the building, historically (Cielava, 2015). In the interviews of Kaže-Zumberga, the actors also stressed the necessity to show the contrast between the elegant façade of the building and the somber interior.

Similarly, David Lowenthal, in his book *Heritage Crusade and Spoils of History* (1999), discusses the links between heritage and history, trying to answer the question of how heritage changes the history. Lowenthal proposes three modes of answers: updating, upgrading, and excluding, which describe the stages of the attempts to change the history or to forget it. In the case of the Corner House, the three modes can be seen in discussing the future of the site. First is the mode of updating, which means "to update the past by garbing its scenes and actors in present-day guise" (Lowenthal 1999, p. 148). The process of updating is adding modern viewpoints or modern concepts to the past events or phenomena. In the case of intangible heritage, which is passed from one generation to another, it is obvious that the core of the tradition will stay but the visible part will most likely change within a particular time and space, whether it is a folk tale, dance, or a song. Much more problematic is discussing tangible heritage, which has often been physically modified following various ideologies that governed society over time. However, the mode of updating can be seen within the discussions of the different

stakeholders, who are keen to keep up with the times and with modern demands whether its the financial perspective of the State Real Estate or the cultural and political viewpoint of the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia and its supporters.

The second mode of upgrading means "to highlight and enhance aspects of the past [that] now felt admirable" (Lowenthal, 1999, p. 148). Lowenthal emphasises that "we use the heritage to improve the past, making it better by modern lights" (Lowenthal, 1999, p. 153). In the case of the Corner House, the idealisation of the past and the attempt to safeguard and keep the best of the heritage can be clearly seen in the desire to convert the house into a castle of well-being, recalling the early twentieth century. This is the perspective of State Real Estate, which is imagining a past that suits us better.

The third mode of how heritage changes the history is that of of excluding. It means, "To expunge what seems shameful or harmful by consigning it to ridicule or oblivion" (Lowenthal 1999, p. 156). This would be the case if the management plan of the site would not consider the museum's perspective, turning the building into a residential building or place for various offices, or even a hotel. This mode stands for forgetting as forgiving. By going through all the three modes—updating, upgrading, and excluding—the future perspectives of the house can be analysed more scrupulously.

Conclusions

The educational exhibition and the guided tours about the complex history of the house will terminate at the end of this year. At the moment, there are no publications or any media overview depicting the actual situation of the Corner House as one of the Latvian state cultural monuments of historical significance. The divided opinions about what to do with the Corner House shows that there is still an urgent need to have a debate about the difficult past. In the last few years, the building's façade has been reconstructed with the hope to attract new inhabitants or tenants; moreover, there is interest in officially renaming the Corner House to Teter's House in order to avoid the symbolic pressure of the name as a relic of a totalitarian regime. However, it is not clear which person or organisation will take over the building in the future. So far, the house retains the veil of uncomfortable heritage, making it difficult to find a long-term manager and financial support for the house. There must be urgent discussions and debates, not only involving the authorities but also the local population. According to the resolution plan of the Occupation Museum Association of Latvia and the Faro Convention, the local population also has the right to express their opinion. Time is running out and there is still no future management plan for the house. After analysing the interviews of different actors and stakeholders, the most likely possible scenario will be neither tearing down the building nor converting the site to an object of dark tourism or painting it black. Most likely, the future perspectives of the two mentioned parties will be consolidated. There is hope that sooner or later, the State Joint Stock Company State Real Estate will find a tenant and

respectively a financial backer that would support the idea of reserving at least the first two floors for the museum and educational exhibition purposes. In conclusion, in this case, the management plan should make sure not to ignore the details of the site's history. It is urgently necessary to have in depth discussions about the significance of the building, as well as its symbolism, various interpretations, and the nation's historical memory. All in all, only time will show what will happen with Riga's uncomfortable heritage.

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Figures

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Interpretation

Jonathan Bill Doe

Gandhi in Ghana

Saint or racist?

Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's statues have attracted protests in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and South Africa. In 2016, Ghana became the latest country to witness yet another protest against a statue of Gandhi, which was located on the campus of the University of Ghana, Legon. The university has about 38,000 students, 1,200 teaching staff, and 200 non-teaching staff (Univeristy of Ghana, n.d). As of September 2016, nearly two thousand Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians signed an online petition to the University Council with the emphatic title, "Gandhi's statue on University of Ghana must come down" (Online Petition, 2016). It became apparent that the fall of Gandhi had to be both physical and mental. The protest was led in the media and on the Internet, mainly by two university professors, Dr. Obadele Kambon and Professor Akosua Adomako Ampofo, both from the University's Institute of African Studies (Kambon, 2016). The image of Gandhi was projected during the pre-independence struggles in Ghana as a proponent of nonviolence. Ghanaian nationalists borrowed the political strategy of nonviolence, which Ghandi was known for, from India (Addo – Fenning, 1972). The image of nonviolence associated with Gandhi was reinforced through films and documentaries that the Indian Government sponsored in 1982 (Roy, 2014). These audio-visuals were shown on Ghanaian televisions, forming a mental picture of a pacifist Hindu saint whose humanity transcended his Hindu upper caste system to the rest of the world. Scholarly discussions and quotes of Gandhi were used to affirm statements in newspapers and

articles (Roy, 2014). Thus, when professor Kambon and Adomako raised their objections to the erection of the statue, they were up against this saintly mental image. The claim that Gandhi was racist was a rude awakening for most signatories to the petition (Online Petition, 2016). The focus of this paper therefore examines the Gandhi statue in Ghana through the following three questions: What is the role of ideologies in the erection and eventual removal of the statue? What is the role of historical interpretation in influencing the ideologies? What is the best way to conserve the ideologically-contested statue? The third question seeks to analyse and avert diplomatic strain between both countries and peoples. The paper is organised in several sections, starting with a detailed description of the case study and an explanation of the theoretical framework used for analysis, and moving on to a discussion and conclusion.

Recognising that any attempt to venture into the social situation of heritage should take on the view that heritage is a living part of culture—an active social context, tied to the daily experiences of a living society (Andrew, 2009)—the author designed the methodology accordingly and tapped into various media sources surrounding the on-going debate. The society in question engages in value creation and the interpretation, re-interpretation, and meaning-making of its past, present, and possible future. The past of the society itself is not homogenous, and it is highly unlikely that all members of the same society will agree on what the actual past was or should have been. Given this hydra-headed context, a qualitative methodological approach is preferable for the case study at hand.

The various aspects of Gandhi's heritage, as well as the protests and counter protests, have left both digital and analogue footprints. These became a valuable resource in conducting this research. The analogue sources are mainly books, journals, and Gandhi's autobiography, and these form the core of primary material for insights on his views. The digital ones include films, documentaries, recorded media interviews, and online news publications and blogs. These are a mixture of primary and secondary materials. The digital sources provide direct access to what each individual and group think about Gandhi and the statue in Ghana. The reasons behind their viewpoints and the ideological stock they come from were analysed through the heritage dissonance theoretical framework (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996), as explained after the introduction of the case study.

Description of the statue and location

The events leading up to the erection and the unveiling suggest how important and saintly the statue was to the Indian government, Ghanaian state officials, and the University authorities. The Indian president, Hon. Pranab Mukherjee, unveiled Gandhi's statue on 13 June 2016 at the University of Ghana (UG) during his state visit to the country. The president's body language conveyed reverence and respect towards the statue during

the unveiling ceremony. The statue was erected in a relatively new garden just a few days before his visit. The three-metre-tall statue is situated on a rectangular platform that is about three metres wide. Though the statue is new, it bears a photograph of Gandhi in his old age with a piece of cloth over his torso, and he is wearing a pair of shorts and sandals, holding a walking stick in his right hand, and is in a walking posture with his right foot put forward.

After playing active roles in India's independence from the British, Gandhi died in 1948, the very year the University of Ghana (UG) was founded. However, apart from this coincidence, there is no personal association with the University or with Ghana as a country since it became a nation in 1957. The only connection that can be made is related to Gandhi's activism and supposed non-violence philosophy, which resonated with Ghanaian nationalists. Ghanaian ex-service men made contact with the independence movement in India, for which Ghandi was a figurehead during the Second World War (Amenumey, 2008).

A closer look at the choice to place the statue in the garden also reveals interesting facts. The three-kilometre-wide campus has many gardens that date back to the 1950s. However, before 2002, the garden where the statue is now located was an ordinary piece of land that was used as a car park. Professor Asenso-Okyere, Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana from 2002 to 2005, ordered that beautifying measures be carried out on the campus as part of his tangible achievements (Ghanaweb, 2005), and the garden was commissioned as part of these measures. His intention in creating the garden, however, was for it to be used as a recreational area for the university community, and not to showcase a statue of Gandhi. The main library of UG shares the southern boundary with the garden. The west side of the garden has buildings for the School of Business. The north and east sides have lecture halls and other faculties. Thus, the garden is an open air and accessible place that is frequently crossed by the people working and studying at the UG, and these people are constantly being confronted with the statue of Gandhi and the ideas it represents.

The Dissonance

Though the protest against the statue was non-violent, the UG authorities mounted a twenty-four-hour guard around the statue. In spite of that, it was reported that part of the statue was defaced (Ghana Plus, 2017).

In response to this, the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the act and announced that the statue will be removed. The University council, reacting to demands from the petition, also confirmed that the statue would be removed (UG Council, 2017). Despite these official confirmations, the statue continues to stand on UG's campus, with agitation simmering in the background.

The Ghanaian *Gandhi must come down movement* differs from the South African "Rhodes must fall" movement in the sense that it is led by professors, and it in turn has awakened the consciousness of the student body, and there is also the potential for it to develop into an international uproar between Ghana and India (Oquaye, 2016). In South Africa, on the other hand, the students' mass movement began with agitation against high school fees. At some point the students connected issues of high fees to colonial oppression and racist policies, a modern-day slavery condition they were subjected to. They thus began to call for the removal of memorials to persons associated with the oppression of Africans, such as Cecil Rhodes.

In Ghana, the arguments against the statue from the petitioners also exuded an ethos of Pan-Africanism, the ideological bulwark that Africans all over the world used to fight against racism, colonialism, and imperialism. There is, however, a latent shade of imperialism that India is pursuing among the circle of developing countries in Africa, and it is also competing with China for African resources (Desai, 2015). This could have been a possible rationale for the Indian president to donate the statue of Gandhi to the University, as well as funds for some academic programmes. It is evident that the donation of the statue, its acceptance, and the protests against it are all based on different ideological tides.

A basic definition of heritage is that it is the aspect of nature or culture people intend to save for future generations (Howard, 2012). An understanding of heritage in Ghanaian society is captured by an Anlo proverb, which says it is at the end of the old ropes that new ones are woven (Dzobo, 1997). The proverb suggests a necessary continuation, not a selection of aspects from the past or present. It also makes room for something new to be added to the already existing heritage in question, but it does not qualify whether the new addition has to be an exact reproduction of the old. That notwithstanding, there is a sense of anticipation for the future in that actions and inactions in the present must be aimed at conserving heritage for the future. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the Ghanaian post-independence intention of using heritage to create a concept of African personality as an identity form, contrary to what African identity was understood to be by the colonial powers during the era of Transatlantic slavery and colonialism.

The universally-acclaimed Western thinker who codified false assumptions about Africans was Lucien Lévy Bruhl (Kebede, 2004). His two books, *Primitive Mentality* and *How Natives Think*, drew a line of distinction between Western people and non- Western people. This distinction, presented as pseudo-science, also served as justification for slavery, colonialism, and eurocentrism (Adi & Sherwood, 2003). Africans, as part of the category of non-Western people, were projected as a racial group that lacked "rationality" and was incapable of explaining causal connections. From the portraits of the historical novel *King Leopold's Ghost*, the African environment was revealed as a hostile environment in which the white race laid the foundation for slavery and colonialism. Bruhl

forgot to ask himself how African people could lack “rationality” but manage to survive in a hostile environment for centuries, or how it was possible for someone to be incapable of explaining causal connections while at the same time relying on river currents to carry his canoe (Henri Bergson, quoted in Kebede, 2004). Bolstered by racial pseudo-science and the dehumanisation of African peoples, Bruhl and his mileau advocated for moral and religious tutelage drawn along lines of colour and nationality: a moral imperative for white Europeans to supposedly save black Africans. Across the Atlantic Ocean, W. E.B Du Bois assembled harrowing sociological evidence of slavery in his book, *Souls of Black Folk*. At the same time, Du Bois’ book posed a seminal question: is the world correct, are Africans less than human (Awoonor, 2006)? This question first prompted a counter-ideological response, and later, strategic political responses were used to fight against slavery, colonialism, and racism, both on African soil and in the diaspora.

The ideological response of people of African descent against inequality was grounded in Pan Africanism. To date, African scholars still grapple with a common definition of Pan Africanism. The nature, place, and time of the different cases of African suppression produced variants of Pan Africanism (Adi & Sherwood, 2003). Given that the focus is on Gandhi’s statue in Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah’s view on Pan Africanism becomes relevant. Kwame Nkrumah was a Ghanaian nationalist who led the country to attain independence from the British in 1957.

Nkrumah was emphatic that the independence of Ghana was meaningless unless it was linked to the liberation of the rest of the African countries under colonialism. This declaration is born out of the understanding of Pan Africanist Marcus Garvey, conceived as ‘Africa for Africans’ (Botwe- Asamoah, 2005). For Nkrumah, that meant Africans must have political and economic control of African resources. But Nkrumah was fully aware that the battle had to be won at the cognitive level. He therefore built upon the concept of African personality first espoused by one of the founding fathers of Pan Africanism, Edward Wilmot Blyden (Adi & Sherwood, 2003). In essence, the African Personality idea is a revival of intrinsic values in African culture, where Africans would derive their self-worth from their own culture, and draw on practical lessons to solve their own problems (Adi & Sherwood, 2003). Among many other policy responses, the Institute of African Studies in UG was established to realise the objectives of the African Personality concept in 1965 (ibid). The philosophy of the Institute was to conduct research and teach for the “reconstruction of the minds of the African youth” (Awoonor, 2006, p. 217).

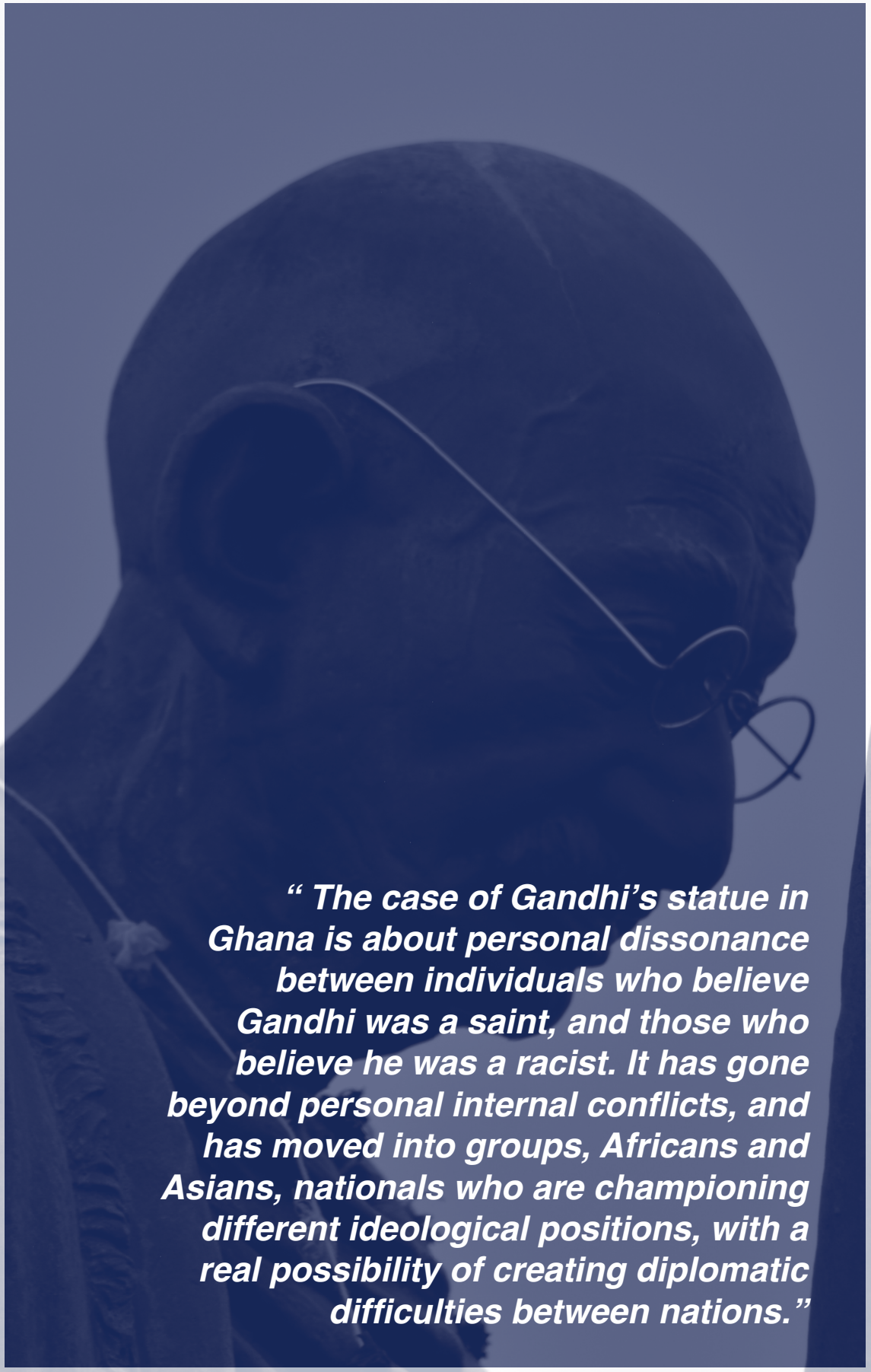
Beyond academic and philosophical responses, Nkrumah also used Ghanaian tangible heritage and architecture to express the ideals of African culture, self-determination, and identity (Hess, n.d). On the very day Ghana became independent, 6 March 1957, a national museum was opened. Artifacts from the continent of Africa, representing major African civilisations such as Egypt, Sudan, and Komaland, were exhibited (Anquandah, 1997). The museum was housed in a round-shaped building of the type common to the

indigenous people of Talensi in northern Ghana (Kankpeyeng, 2009). It would appear that the driving purpose of the museum and the exhibition was to make a statement that Africans had a history and civilisation,and to emphasise the connectedness of African cultures and peoples. The new nation was therefore set on the path of economic growth. However, after nine years in power, Nkrumah was removed through a military take-over. The country was plunged into series after series of military coups d'état. Economic fortunes dwindled, which badly deflated the self-confidence Ghanaians had in 1957. When the last military government (PNDC) was preparing the country for civilian government, they embarked on a restoration of the Pan African image of Nkrumah and W.E.B Du Bois (Du Bois died in 1965 and was buried in Ghana) (Hess, n.d). The mortal remains of Nkrumah were brought from his natal home in 1992 and reinterred in the park in which he stood to declare the independence of Ghana (Hess, n.d). The park is now known as Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park. The park also has a bronze statue of Nkrumah dressed like a Ghanaian chief with his right arm pointing forward, as if to echo one of his favourite slogans: "forward ever, backwards never". Nevertheless, it would seem as if the symbolic restoration of Nkrumah's image was to rejuvenate the self-confidence of Ghanaians and move them towards the new phase of civilian government and economic prosperity.

A decade later, a longer-term economic and diplomatic cooperation between Ghana and India began to emerge. India awarded a grant to Ghana that was used to construct the new presidential facility in Accra, the capital city of Ghana (Oquaye, 2016). The diplomatic, political, and economic support from India is viewed as sub-imperialism along the same trajectories as super powers, such as the EU and the US, and the world financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Desai, 2015). Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa form the acronym BRICS. The BRICS countries have relatively stable economies, and developing countries in Africa have turned to them for economic support. Especially in the case of India and China, their presence in Africa is seen as a South-South cooperation that offers policy alternatives that would bring better economic yields to African countries. Contrary to new hopes of economic salvation from neo-liberal capitalists, BRICS promote economic dependency in Africa (Luce, 2015). BRICS is sponsoring huge infrastructure development in Africa, and African countries will have to endlessly be paying off loans. In some cases, African countries have to offer their resources as collateral for such loans. These conditions are similar to colonial conditions (Luce, 2015). These sub-imperialist tendencies are perceived as a form of cultural imperialism. The donation of Gandhi's statue to Ghana would therefore be part of India's cultural sub-imperialism.

The ideological conflict surrounding Gandhi

There are various groups and nationals who have conflicting views on Gandhi. They can roughly be divided into four groups: in India, there are pro-Gandhi and anti-Gandhi



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“ The case of Gandhi’s statue in Ghana is about personal dissonance between individuals who believe Gandhi was a saint, and those who believe he was a racist. It has gone beyond personal internal conflicts, and has moved into groups, Africans and Asians, nationals who are championing different ideological positions, with a real possibility of creating diplomatic difficulties between nations.”

groups; in Ghana, there were initially a pro- and an anti-Gandhi group. However, it can be deduced from the reasons provided by some signatories of the petition and from public debate that the anti-Gandhi group produced more evidence to back their arguments, and as a result, the pro-Gandhi group either became quiet or switched camp to the anti-Gandhi group (Kambon, 2016).

The key to understanding different views on Gandhi in India lies in the nature of the caste system and how the Hindu religion or philosophy has been used to keep this system in place for thousands of years. Essentially, there are upper castes and lower castes. The lower castes have been called different names, such as untouchables, depressed classes, scheduled castes, Harijans, and servile classes (Ambedkar, 1945, p.7). Gandhi belonged to one of the upper castes, the Bania caste (Gandhi, n.d). The Hindu religious text regards the upper castes as pure and holy, whereas the lower castes are considered to be "inferior and therefore in charge of performing duties for upper castes (Roy, 2014, 2014b, time 7.59 sec). Gandhi believed the deplorable status quo of the lower caste should be maintained, even at the end of his life (Roy, 2014b, time:12 minutes). Therefore, to those in the lower caste, whose members have been fighting for equality, Gandhi is not considered a hero or a saint.

Roy (2014) observes that the caste system in India and global capitalism have formed a deadly alliance in that the owners of the big corporations in India come from the upper caste Hindus. Gandhi's caste, Banias, own media houses, mines, petrol and chemical industries, and universities. They also form the majority of employees within the judiciary system and and of moneylenders in rural India. Though Banias are in the minority, globalisation and capitalism have shifted political power and economic power to the minority. It would appear that the Gandhi statue in Ghana would therefore be supported by the Bainas, but certainly not by all Indians. This assumption is supported by the fact that a group of 21 people of Indian descent posted a Youtube video in support of the removal of the statue (AIDAGG, 2016). They described Gandhi as a racist and increased pressure on the UG authorities to remove the statue.

The online petition that was addressed to the UG council members mentions five reasons why the statue should be removed (Online Petition, 2016). First, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's racist views; second, there are currently no statues of Ghanaian heroes and heroines on the UG campus; third, racist symbols were being removed from major universities and UG must not be left out; fourth, there is a protest against Gandhi's statues throughout the world; and fifth, UG had not consulted stakeholders of the university before erecting the statue. Of all the five reasons, it is the first and second that are the strongest and that cut to the core of Pan Africanism and the African Personality ideology.

One of the key questions that was debated within the movement to take down

Gandhi's statue is whether or not Gandhi was a racist. An examination of Gandhi's own autobiography and other publications, some of which form part of the petition, show that Gandhi did not think of the black race as equal to Indians nor to Europeans (GandhiServe Foundation). It was the argumentation for this very equality that made Du Bois produce his book, *Souls of Black Folk*, and made African thinkers develop Pan Africanism and African Personality ideologies. The views of Gandhi on racism and the fact that his statue is now on a territory that had seen a lot of Pan African rhetoric only serves to roll back the progress or reset the conditions under which these ideologies sprung. The conditions can be considered in terms of the developing economic status of Ghana and the economic status of India. From Roy's observation, the upper caste of India holds the economic power (2014a, 2014b). It would suggest the upper caste wants the statue to represent their image abroad, similar to how British colonial masters put their names and images on landmarks during the British imperial era.

Finally, the third and fourth reasons present a growing negative perception of Gandhi's image across the world. These two reasons also mirror the third research question raised in the introduction of this paper. In 2010, Gandhi's statue was shipped from India and erected on the University of Michigan-Flint campus to mark his birth and an annual peace day celebration in the community (AlHajal, 2010). Dr. Marigowda sponsored and funded the statue with the motive of instilling the image of Gandhi in the heart of the community and the USA (ibid). It is not clear whether Dr. Marigowda was a member of the upper caste in India, but it is clear he believed in the sainthood of Gandhi and put his efforts into projecting Gandhi's ideals. However, it was not long before protests arose in Canada and in the USA itself. Like in Ghana, the protesters in North America insisted Gandhi was not the right person to serve as a symbol of peace and equality. Similar views have been expressed about Cecil Rhodes and Gandhi himself in South Africa and in the UK (Chaudhuri, 2016; Langa, 2017). Rhodes championed British imperial interest and endorsed imperialist and racist views, making him, like Gandhi, a historical personality that falls short when it comes to promoting a principle of equality for all humans. But the approach that the Oxford University authorities adopted to resolve the issue suggested a means to resolve and accommodate a similar issue to the case of Gandhi's statue (Rawlinson, 2016). In Oxford, consultations were conducted that showed that a majority of locals supported keeping the statue, but providing context for it and interpreting it through a critical lens that shows all of its historical facets.

Theoretical Framework

The ideologies of Pan Africanism, African Personality, and Indian cultural sub-imperialism have become the conflicting forces encompassing the statue of Gandhi in Ghana. Indeed, the views of Gandhi on the black race in South Africa links Gandhi with Trans-Atlantic and colonial masters. These thorny issues coalesced into heritage dissonance theory (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). This theory was espoused in 1957 in social psychology

and was borrowed to explain conflict-ridden issues that are ever-present in heritage studies (Festinger, 1957). The theory simply states that dissonance is a negative state of being that a person feels when that person's actions contradict his or her beliefs or opinions (Aronson, 2008).

The theory is situated on three fundamental propositions. First, it states that all humans are sensitive to contradiction between action and beliefs. That contradiction comes through self-recognition each time an individual's action is inconsistent with personal beliefs. Second, the self-awareness of contradiction would cause dissonance and the person would be motivated to resolve it. Third, dissonance would be resolved in three basic steps: (a) change belief, (b) change action (c) change perception of action.

Based on this theory, personal dissonance can be easily handled, but in relation to heritage, and especially in the case of Gandhi's statue in Ghana, it is about the personal dissonance of those individuals who believe Gandhi was a saint and those who believe he was a racist. It has gone beyond personal internal conflicts and has moved into groups, Africans and Asians, and nationals who are championing different ideological positions, and there is a real possibility of creating diplomatic difficulties between the nations.

Discussion and Conclusion

In response to the first question posed in the introduction, different ideologies have played a role in the erection and possible removal of the statue. As has been described above, all the different ideological shades are supported by people who believe in them. Respective ideologies are the source of their identity and self-worth. For some, a certain ideology would perpetuate their economic power, while this instantly means that others would be exploited. The exploited, on the other hand, would not sit still without protest. In light of the dissonance theory, Hindu upper castes would not have a problem if statues of Gandhi were spread across the world and he was revered as a saint. It would give those associated or connected with Ghandi a respectable image and identity. The image of Gandhi would eternalise their power and reign over the lower castes, since according to the Hindu religion, the lower caste cannot change their position on the caste hierarchy. The lower caste, however, would in all probability detest the statue wherever it was erected.

In the same vein, Ghanaians who believe in Pan Africanism and African Personality as their only ideological redemption from over five hundred years of slavery, colonialism, and racism, would not be happy to know about Gandhi's views but would unanimously be in favour of the statue's erection on Ghanaian soil. Even the ex-service men and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who possibly knew about his views, appeared to have borrowed a pragmatic political strategy from the Indian Independence movement in which Gandhi was a leading personality. Elements of non-violence that Gandhi was associated with could be found in Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's declaration of positive action in 1950, which was part of the process to achieve Ghanaian

independence from the British. At a much deeper level, Chaudhuri (2016) attempted to refocus the issues surrounding the Gandhi and Rhodes statues by establishing a link to institutional racism that is still present on university campuses today. Rhodes was one of the originators of institutional racism. He believed the Anglo-Saxon race was superior and should therefore colonise others. He went further to establish scholarship schemes on university campuses in South Africa, America, and Europe to support his views (Rhodes, 1902). The same point has also been eloquently analysed by Langa (2017). From the point of view of the lower caste in India, the crux of the matter is the deep-seated levels of inequality that the figures represent. With regard to Gandhi, the conflict about his statue has spanned three continents. Since this is about heritage, it underscores the suggestion that dissonant heritage is universal (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996). However, the solutions to resolve such conflicts around heritage cannot be universal. Issues of dissonance are saturated with complexities and are very often contingent on how individual groups of people perceive their heritage and want to interpret it.

As in Oxford, there were consultations held to develop a better understanding of the opinions of stakeholders. From the report, the majority agreed for the statue to remain. This view is not surprising given the fact that Rhodes was British and his foundation still supports Oxford. As a sign of compromise, the committee chose to interpret the statue in context as a clear attempt to distance the university from Rhode's controversial views. In the case of UG, there is no evidence of any form of consultation prior to the erection of Gandhi's statue. Judging by the nearly two thousand people who signed the petition, it seems obvious that there was and still is less community support for the statue. Another potential approach that could be applied is interpreting Gandhi's statue on the UG campus in a way that is similar to how Rhodes' statue was handled in Oxford. This solution would also need to go through a community consultation and approval process. However, some of the petitioners are already dismissive of this solution (Kambon, 2016). They suggest, instead, that the statue be repatriated to India, specifically to the Bania community. For now, it seems to be the only place the statue can find acceptance.

The goal of this paper has been to understand the role that ideology plays in heritage conservation. The clear answer to the research question is that ideology does significantly influence how heritage objects are interpreted. The example of Gandhi's statue shows that a single heritage object can mean different things to different people. There is also an overwhelming undercurrent of economic survival and political power wrangling that can be connected to just a single heritage property. It is in this regard that all heritage must be considered in its contemporary context. That is to say, a heritage item may belong to the past, but it is essential to first think of what the contemporary societies think of it before it is interpreted or displayed. Howard (2003) stressed the importance of this aspect of heritage work when he indicated that as a basic principle, a heritage manager must seek the disinherited. The disinherited could be those who disagree or are conflicted about the heritage in question.

Certainly, the contemporary students and lecturers in Ghana would want to conserve heritage for future generations. If they are in favour of keeping and maintaining Gandhi's statue, this could mean entrenching India's sub-imperialism and the continuation of upper caste privilege. However, since equality principles that emerged from the Pan Africanism movement form part of the moral value system of the contemporary society, the majority of Ghanaians would most definitely engage in actions that would remove the symbols representing inequality. The best way to conserve the statue would be to seek a community where it would be accepted, and in this case it would be in India.

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Figures

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(Barrientos, 2017)

Juan Carlos Barrientos

Analysis of a Difficult Heritage from an Ideology of Violence

The Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg

Introduction

> Germany has a past that for whatever reason will not pass away. The Nazi past has been seen by German politicians and theorists as an ineluctable burden, one beset by and working through the mystical force of taboo (Olick, 1997, p.921)

However, as inescapable as this unwanted inheritance may be to modern Germans, the historic and forceful taboo of the Nazi spell has had a powerful effect in shaping the modern identity of the nation that arose from the ashes to become a model society for the twenty-first century and a beacon of freedom in the world. Since the creation of the German state, historians have talked about a German *Sonderweg*, meaning a special or separate path diverging from the Western historical norm. Originally, the term had positive connotations, indicating that Germany stood as a stable polity in relation to neighbours like France, which succumbed to revolutions and political upheaval throughout the nineteenth century. In the post-war period, this sense of *Sonderweg* has come to mean something different; it now indicates that the German identity must be continually regarded as “a patient in therapy” by its own people (Maier, 1988, p.101). A very thin margin is therefore left for a negotiation with its past.

The history of this turbulent time is engraved in the essence of a country that has chosen to prudently remember, while callously ignoring the imprint. Modern Germany seeks to replace its misrepresentative historic façade with one of a more suitable heritage

that reflects the reality of a new era, a goal which erupts out of tragedy to create a collective memory that reconciles the nation with its history. Within this struggle to rebuild a shattered historic legacy, the remaining monuments of the National Socialist period defiantly keep getting in the picture of charming cities such as Nuremberg in Bavaria. Here, the carcasses and monolithic remnants of the depravation of nationalism are allowed to stand as resonant witnesses to the undesirable memory that Germany does not allow itself to forget. At the same time, however, they are heritage sites that few to no citizens of Nuremberg will call their own. The Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg have an inherent association with the crimes perpetrated by the National Socialist regime against humanity (Macdonald, 2009a). This was the place where this virulent and deadly ideology was broadcast to the world, and where the Holocaust was heralded in by the Party leaders in massive gatherings of the perpetrators. In other words, one cannot dissociate the most evident surviving site of this ideology's legacy with the horror and trail of death left by this regime's internment camps. It is this precise situation that creates the difficult task for the German government and public to agree upon a morally-fitting approach for the preservation and presentation of the place (Macdonald, 2009b).

The following case study explores this subject through the lens of the field of studies termed difficult heritage, which theorises about how to deal with sites of historical importance whose shameful past blurs the understanding of the need for its conservation (Burström & Gelderblom, 2011). Conversely, the paper will seek to present an understanding of how Germany deals with this difficult heritage site from the perspective of the collective memory and new national identity it attempts to forge out of it.

Difficult heritage

There is a composite word in the German language that was crafted to subsume in itself a meaning for the attempt to adjust, examine, and learn to cope with the past, particularly the *difficult past* of the National Socialist period; the word is *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Within Germany, there is a serious effort to learn about the past as a means to never allow it to be repeated. The term is usually used to describe the general compromise as well as the concrete responsibility of the state and society in general to create a comprehensive understanding of this past as a means to overcome it. However, the concept fails to describe how this could be achieved.

In relation to the Nuremberg Nazi Party Rally grounds, a question then emerges: should the remains be left to abandonment and neglect because of its origins? This question of how a national community deals with the remnants of a past that is currently despised forms the core of the concept we understand as difficult heritage. It is this uncomfortable situation that leads to the search for a rightful and truthful way to handle a historical monument or memory. When a historical site presents itself as a political liability due to its disgraceful origin, designating it an official cultural heritage site and grating access to

Figure 1. *The Grandstand 2017, Zeppelin tribune (Barrientos, 2017).*

the public can be a cause for concern. Nevertheless, in special cases, such as the Party Rally Grounds, there exists a historic necessity to preserve these monuments for posterity as protected memorials. On the other hand, the interests and sentiments of local residents should also be taken into consideration, as this heritage is primarily their own. Another important aspect to consider is the degree of responsibility that the public administration should have when regulating the presentation of the site to the public. In essence, these are all the features placed under the label of *difficult heritage* that play a role in the discussion of sites such as the case study that is the focus of this paper (Burström & Gelderblom, 2011).

Description of the site

Nuremberg is a beautiful German city located in the scenic Bavarian region. The city is home to a little over 500,000 people and is situated along the Pegnitz River, which divides its old town into two districts.

Although more than 90% of its buildings were destroyed by bombs during the Second World War, its Old Town has been rebuilt according to the original prints and it is still surrounded by a medieval wall with its four towers and main gates. Nuremberg was chosen by Hitler to be the place for his Party Rallies due to its historical significance as an imperial city, going as far as to call it, “The most German city in Germany” (Macdonald, 2009a). Between 1927 and 1938, hundreds of thousands of militants and sympathisers periodically flocked to the city to take part in elaborate parades and massive rallies. The sad legacy

of those days sparks an interest in many who come to the city to explore the places that still stand as a reminder of the grandiosity and megalomania of this regime (Macdonald, 2006a).

The huge complex of Nazi structures can be found just outside of the city centre, about four kilometers southeast of the Old Town between the fairgrounds and the Dutzendteich Lake. There, visitors can see the large Zeppelin field with its enormous tribune inspired by the Altar of Pergamum and the Coliseum, designed by architect Albert Speer (Fig 1). The esplanade for rallies is a large space presided over by a broad stone tribune and staircase with a pulpit in its center. It was from this pulplit that the Führer addressed the 250 thousand people who attended this gathering annually between 1933 and 1938. Close to the esplanade lies a monumental semicircular construction intended to be the Congress Center, which is reminiscent of the Roman Coliseum. The building was never completed, but nevertheless its remains stand as a massive example of fascist architecture (Hagen & Ostergren, 2006). During the war, after the French campaign in 1940, the Nazis employed enslaved prisoners of war for its construction (Puvogel et al., 1996). Enormous quantities of granite from 80 different quarries were extracted and brought to Nuremberg by these concentration camp prisoners who were worked to death in order to supply materials for the Nazi building program in the city. When the war entered its course towards the end of 1942, the construction process was slowed down, but works were still being carried out up until March of 1945 (Dietzfelbinger & Liedtke, 2004).

Between 1939 and 1945, the old barracks for the SA (Sturmabteilung) and the accommodations for the Hitler Youth were transformed into internment camps for the forced labourers and prisoners of war, who were liberated in mid-April 1945 by American forces. On 20 April 1945, after fierce resistance, the city of Nuremberg was finally captured (Macdonald, 2009a). Three days later, a victory parade was held on the grounds of the Zeppelin field. Not long thereafter, the famous Swastika at the top of the tribune was blown up, a moment that was recorded for history in iconic footage that has come to symbolise the final defeat of Nazism. After the war ended, the internment camps were used to hold Nazi Party leaders and SS (Schutzstaffel) members captured by the Americans (Nürnberg, M. Documentation Center).

The Documentation Center, which includes an archive, museum, and research area, was developed within the unfinished Congress Hall. It is here that the permanent exhibition, *Fascination and Terror,* is displayed. In 2001, the city of Nuremberg unveiled the permanent exhibition, which is concerned with the causes, the Hitlerian cult, and the consequences of National Socialism in Germany (Nürnberg, M. Documentation Center). Through this, Nuremberg makes amends with its past as a final way to overcome and condemn this dark episode (Macdonald, 2006b).

Ideological symbolism

Ever since the construction of the monuments and the subsequent vanquishing of the Third Reich, there has been speculation about the symbolic power projected by the architecture of the Nazi Party Rally Grounds. Can architecture have an ideology? (The Wall Street Journal, 2013) Indeed, there is a collective opinion that some historic guilt is being reserved for the structures that served as a stage for the crimes. These monuments have retained an unbreakable association with their origins, as they are considered a kind of receptacle that remained polluted after containing the essence of all that represented the regime. They were designed to do just that.

Since its conception in the minds of Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler himself, the strokes that delineated the grounds and edifications were conceived to be a materialisation of the fascist ideology. To Hitler and the National Socialists, the buildings themselves were symbols of the Germanic identity being forged. This creationist vision placed Nuremberg at the epicenter of this process, and the Rally Grounds were to be the cradle for the rebirth of the nation. “We are erecting”, Hitler said, “the shrines and symbols of a new and noble culture” (Taylor, 1974, p.14).

To provide an example of how the design holds the archetypes of the ideology, one only needs to understand how they manifest themselves even in the smallest of details. The researcher Birkholz (2015) takes a close look at the composition of the Great Road (*Große Straße*) on the Rally Grounds in her paper *Granite on the Ground*: Former *Nazi Party Rally Grounds*. She describes how the whole concept and design of the road was meant to have a powerful symbolic effect, from the location and direction of the road down to the material used for the pavement and the technique used for placing it. The sixty-meter-wide and two-kilometer-long pathway leads from the heart of the Imperial Castle in Nuremberg, which was a seat to the medieval German Emperors, to Hitler’s Luitpoldarena in the Rally Grounds. The Luitpoldarena was one of the holy spaces in the National Socialist cult, where the highly symbolic ceremony of the consecration of flags by the Blood Flag took place. The general concept behind the placement of the Great Road was to create a symbolic link between the historic First Reich and the new Third Reich, thus serving as a legitimising physical display for the ideology of National Socialism. The road was built using 60,000 massive (40kg), handcrafted granite slabs. They were crafted using a special technique for sharpening the edges that allowed for a particularly flat and homogenous surface. The design therefore also created in the stonework an acoustic amplifier for the thunderous sounds of the Prussian Goose-step of the troops.

On the other hand, granite is an expensive construction material that was chosen because of its high durability and its properties, as it has been associated since antiquity with the monuments deemed to last for eternity. If the Reich was to last a thousand years, its

legacy in stone was to be a reflection of the National Socialist epoch for generations to come. “Our architectural works”, said Speer, “should speak to the conscience of a future Germany” (Speer, 1969, p.77). However, it was Speer himself who would later, in his own memoirs, refuse to acknowledge that his architecture was impregnated with the ideology he pretended to preserve for posterity. He claims that architecture is incapable of transmitting specific meanings because it is not a language in itself, therefore it cannot convey an ideology. This represents a reversal from the idea that his architecture would be corresponding to “words in stone” speaking to the centuries. Speer claims that architecture is essentially art, and thus it has no political connotation within it. It can be employed only as an “enhancing” tool for the political ideology; being a mere instrument of “aestheticisation”, it cannot be considered a direct vehicle for the transmission of the political ideas of those who built it (Macdonald, 2009a, p.28). The controversial architectural theorist Leon Krier seems to agree with this: “I think it is really great architecture”, he stated, referring to the Nazi Rally Grounds in Nuremberg during a conference at Yale University, “you take off the swastikas, and you can admire it without feeling guilty” (The Wall Street Journal, 2013).

However, despite Speer’s attempt at rehabilitating his architecture in Nuremberg, the purpose behind the design remains loud and defiant, attesting the original political intention of infusing it with the National Socialist ideology. In her research, Birkholz (2015, p.11) asks herself, when referring to the Great Road, “what makes a pavement design in the broadest sense political?” The answer to her question is to point out all the components that make up the architecture of this site: the structures, the size, and the design. She concludes that “there is no fascist granite, but there is an arrangement which mirrors fascist ideals” (Birkholz, 2015, p. 11).

Present state

A field visit to the location of the surviving structures around the Dutzendteich Lake allows the visitor to undertake a rather inconclusive historical wandering after visiting the Documentation Center. Those who embark on the educational journey propelled by the museum are confronted with a disturbance in the nature of the historical vestiges of the park. Far from being a “somber memorial” or an archaeological site of modern remains, it is a set of structures abandoned to the elements and surrounded by sports facilities (Fig 2). Some baffled visitors from Spain were appalled by the state of the structures and wondered why there would be an American Football team holding their practices in the middle of the historic Zeppelin field. They claimed that this robbed the visitor of the experience of being immersed in the meaning of a place that should be reserved for reflection (Interview in June 2017). A sign on a wall leading up the stairs towards the Zeppelin Tribune Grandstand warns the visitors of the perils of moving forward due to the risk of the unstable structure. It was from this place that the powerful rants that changed the course of human history were delivered. Now it stands as a crumbling ruin, used to

(Barrientos, 2017)

"The legacy of the dark period is the backbone of a modern historical façade that cannot be renounced, however, it is cast apart in the hopes that the world stops staring at this scar."

Figure 2.
Deteriorating structures still standing at the Rally Grounds, Nuremberg. (Barrientos, 2017)

store the tires and equipment for the car races that periodically take place on the site.

The irony is not lost on the sightseer, of course. It is an odd destiny that befell this place that was once consecrated as the beating heart of a tyrannical empire, as it is now a recreational area used to practice the national sport of America. However, the irony goes beyond this and into the weeds growing on the staircases of the stadium and the crackling slabs of marble in the towers. After a mere 70 years of existence, the decaying ruins are not able to withstand the trials of time. This is despite the fact that the structures were conceived by Albert Speer to be megalithic structures that would remain imposing for all eternity, even as ruins (Speer, 1969). He explained this in his memoirs when recalling the ideas for the design of the future site. Speer tells of how Hitler was determined in his vision to create a physical legacy for future generations of Germans, an inheritance on par with the monumental heirlooms left by the Roman Emperors that Mussolini and the Italian fascists could link back to. The architect of the Reich proposed using durable materials and techniques in what he later would call the “Theory of Ruin Value” (1969). This concept was allegedly first employed in the construction of the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg and would allow the structures to retain their integrity without facing significant decay, even as ruins. However, by 1967 parts of the Zeppelin Tribune had already become a hazard for visitors because of instability and had to be demolished (Macdonald, 2006b). This failure to last even a short

span of time was perhaps the result of the short deadlines for the construction given to Speer by the organisers of the Party Rally. As he mentions in his memoirs, in the case of the Zeppelin Tribune, he was pressed to finish the works hastily and with low-quality materials.

Nevertheless, the damage from time and neglect is a predominating sight throughout the surviving structures at the Rally Grounds. The cracks on the monuments are a constant reminder to visitors that this is not a cherished memorial that is being preserved for the awe of the tourists who flock every year to see them. The museum and site are visited by tourists as well as by students and researchers by the thousands, moved either by their historical curiosity or by the morbid fascination it inspires (Fig 3). Many seek to understand the events that led to the Holocaust or just to have a glimpse into this gloomy period (Macdonald, 2006a). According to the Documentation Center, since it was opened in 2001 the Nazi Rally Party Grounds have hosted more than 1.2 million visitors (Nürnberg, M. Documentation Center). The place is indeed a historical site of great importance for many people beyond the borders of Germany. As was pointed out by an American visitor, this is a heritage site that has transcended national boundaries to belong to all of humanity because of the significant events that derived from what happened there (Interview in June 2017). But can this difficult heritage be sequestered from the people who actually live in Nuremberg?

New German identity

Societies that have evolved from tragedy in the way that Germany has usually have a complicated approach to dealing with history (Alexander, 2010). Their history emerged from the ruins of trauma. The shock of *Stunde Null* (*hour zero*) had to be suppressed in the face of a reality that demanded a resilient reaction from the survivors. The *hour zero* was the silent moment of reckoning that sent millions into a distressful realisation that a new world was about to be unleashed upon them. But after this harrowing and cathartic experience, what was to become of the old world? How can the material relics from the past be absorbed without challenging the foundations of the reconstructed present? Times of historical upheaval and transcendence are the origins of what Pierre Nora calls *Lieux de memoire*, or sites of memory, created in the imagery of the people surrounding the material legacy that keeps those events alive. These are “sites where memory crystallises and secretes itself from a particular historical moment” (Nora, 1989, p. 7). This concept of a site of memory then exists inherently in a physical structure when the footprint of a historical happening engulfs it without the possibility of dissociation. However, this identity has to be consciously and subconsciously agreed upon by the community in which the place stands. For the people of Nuremberg and the rest of the world, the Nazi Party Rally Grounds are without a doubt a place of historical memory. To the Germans, however, this particular memory is intertwined with the traumatic imprint left on their collective memory by the shock of *Stunde Null.*

Figure 3. *Tourist read the information slabs at the Zeppelin Tribune. (Barrientos 2017)*

This turning point in the nation's history is, for them, the focus of solemn historical reflection and the impetus for pondering about the past and the future. It was a thundering shake-up of the whole structure of the nation, which uprooted the base and turned over its self-image. After this moment of purging, the shattered identity had to be rebuilt using new bricks for its construction in order not to recreate the now despised pathway that led to the catastrophe of *hour zero*. Within the creation of this new self-image, questions regarding the material legacy of the past eventually began emerging. In the case of the Rally Grounds, the question of what to do with the place was more urgent, since the sheer size of the monuments and the strong association with the past made it impossible for Nuremberg to ignore them. The emergence of a new Germany demanded an assimilation of the past (with a cautious interpretation) into what remained of it.

"Collective memory like an autobiography must seem our own" (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 503). For post-war Germany, the arrival of a new era meant a rebirth of an identity. A revision of the past was at hand, and there was a clear need to present a different face to the world, one that acknowledged a difficult heritage that was being overcome with a reconstructed collective memory. In this new collective memory, the past is a distant stranger that the present has divorced, and its traces are treated like a cured disease that must be advertised against in order to avoid contracting it again. The best approach has been decided to be callous distance with a strong component of educational guidance that allows the past to be fully understood but never flirted with. In this sense, all the associations of glory with this period of empire and conquest had to be removed from the remains if they

Figure 4. *The Rally grounds re today a recreational area for the citizens of Nuremberg (Barrientos 2017).*

were to be preserved. This heritage was not to be highlighted, it was to be excluded and overwritten with the shame of the crimes it inspired (Lowenthal, 1998). The way Nuremberg dealt with this task was to inaugurate the permanent exhibition *Fascination and Terror* in the Documentation Center in the Congress Hall building in 2001. In this exhibition, the visitor can take a stroll through the history of the National Socialist period. The origins of the ideology are discussed within the context of understanding what led the German society of the time to be fascinated by the tenets of a voracious ideology that completely devoured the essence of a generation. It also details the crimes perpetrated in the name of the nation and the dire consequences of the war upon the people of Germany, especially through the videos of personal accounts being related by actual survivors. In regard to the structures themselves, Nuremberg has decided upon another approach for engaging with this difficult heritage, which they call *Profanierung.* This approach strips the monuments of any significance its builder intended.

Profanation

As mentioned before, the foreign visitor to the Rally Grounds is often startled to learn that there is an apparent indifference shown towards the upkeep of the structures and the site by the administrative authorities. A lack of any visible form of maintenance is not the only kind of neglect the guest notices upon exploration of the Grounds. There is also a disconnect between the educational and historical experiences at the Documentation Center, with the secular or dissonant use given to the areas by the citizens and the city of Nuremberg. This is not, however, a

random act of unfounded contempt on the part of the authorities towards this protected site. It is the result of a deliberate and premeditated policy that was put forth in the 1980s by the city's culture minister, the renowned social historian Dr. Hermann Glaser. This strategy for dealing with the Nazi heritage consists of profaning it with banal or everyday activities, which is therefore simply referred to as *Profanierung or profanation* (Macdonald, 2009a). Although this term has been employed since the 1980s to describe the banal interactions between the citizens of Nuremberg and their site of difficult heritage, the practice certainly precedes it. The exhibition at the Documentation Center provides evidence of all kinds of *profane* activities being encouraged at the site, not only as a means of demystifying and stripping the ruins of their ritualistic associations, but also simply to make practical use of those spaces. Before the land around the Dutzendteich Lake was taken over by the Nazis, the whole area had been a recreational space enjoyed by the families of Nuremberg since the late nineteenth century. The land was the venue for a park around the lake with a public bathhouse and even a Zoo (Information Stations, Documentation Center, Nuremberg). Hence, the population felt it was, in a way, a *civic duty* and an act of reassertion to take back the Grounds and return them to the state they were in before the days of the *Reichsparteitag*. In a way, the profanation of the legacy of the Rally Grounds has been, for the local citizens, a *Vergangenheitsbewältigung,* or a strategy for coping with the past (Fig 4).

Conclusion

"Remembering great evil saddles descendants with ancestral guilt", said David Lowenthal (2015, p. 544). This assertion couldn't be more truthful and close to the German consciousness, as, history still casts a shadow upon the modern nation today. This shadow, however, is mostly cast by the German's own sense of guilt and the collective self-imposed atonement. A desire to forget coexists in Germany with a zeal to commemorate the victims of the crimes of the perpetrators (Lowenthal, 1985). The legacy of the dark period is the backbone of a modern historical façade that cannot be renounced, but it is still cast apart in the hopes that the world will stop staring at this scar. It is this past that shaped the present ideology that the nation embraces, including its state policies and educational agenda. Nevertheless, it is engraved in the modern ideological arrangement of the new national identity that this past is to be set apart as a despised memory of an unspeakable time. The contrasting views often inspire opposing reactions to the preservation of sites of memory like the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg. Some are of the view that if the present is to be remade, the past must also be reimagined, and therefore the remnants should be altered (i.e. erased) (Lowenthal, 1985). But cleansing Nuremberg's past by demolishing the monuments would constitute a terrible crime against the memory of the nation and also against the common shared history of humanity. Nuremberg understands this despite its citizens' contempt towards this permanent reminder of an unwanted past. They have learned to overcome it with a stronger identity that spans centuries before the period that those structures represent.

The city of Nuremberg is determined to restore its image as the cradle for the idealised Germanic civilisation of yore, while also accepting their duty to create space (a museum) devoted to educating the world about the evils of the National Socialist legacy.

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Estibaliz Sienra Iracheta

The Valley of the Fallen

Conflicts with ideology, collective memory, and the conservation of heritage

Introduction

The landscape at the Valle de los Caídos, or Valley of the Fallen, is dominated by an imposing concrete cross—the biggest Catholic cross in the world—which can be seen from 32 kilometres away, protruding with its 152 meters over the forests of the Cuelgamuros Valley in the Sierra de Guadarrama, near Madrid, Spain (Fig.1). Considered as Spain's third most visited site (ABC, 2015) the monumental ensemble is comprised of a Catholic basilica, a Benedictine abbey, and a memorial.

However, almost 60 years after its construction—and 40 years after the death of its creator—what could at first be considered an innocuous example of Spanish cultural heritage remains a central subject of national discomfort among the majority of the population. Fuelled by conflicting positions and intense discussions involving the civil society and members of the academic and political world, the Valley of the Fallen has become a recurrent topic of national and international debates regarding the conservation and interpretation of cultural heritage. The popular landmark, visited by over 254,059 people a year, is currently considered "the only monument of exaltation of fascism that remains in Europe" (Robledo, 2010).

Through an extensive analysis of news reports and articles, as well as specialised literature, this case study aims to present and examine the major focal points for

Figure 1. *Aerial view of the Valley of the Fallen (Diaz 2012 / CC BY-SA 3.0).*

gaining a holistic understanding of different aspects of heritage and their relationship with ideologies and the construction of collective memory. Furthermore, this essay will describe the social and political implications of a prominent landmark in a country that, unlike Germany or Italy, transitioned from a totalitarian dictatorship into a democracy through pacific means. The current controversies that have arisen and the possibilities that have been considered to find a general consensus are also presented.

Background

The turn of the twentieth century was characterised by a generalised sense of social unrest. Led by the major cultural and philosophical transformations of the fin-de-siècle, the fallout from the First World War, and the intensified economic hardships of the Great Depression (Payne, 1995), the beginning of the Epoch was marked by major socio-political and economic changes that altered world orders and further divided society and politics into divergent ideological factions. These tumultuous conceptual stances, growing simultaneously in opposition and strength, began to permeate the cultural systems and emphasise a sense of turmoil.

By 1905, the world had seen the rise of communism and socialism as major political ideologies, which directed workers against the bourgeoisie, capitalism, and all of its perceived threats. The Russian Revolution culminated with the abdication of the Czar and the end of centuries of imperial rule in the country. With the later formation of

the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922, these ideologies would begin to be perceived as a major threat to European powers and the economic and socio-political conventions of the West.

The international preamble to disaster had also driven the world into a major catastrophic conflict. Known as the Great War, the transnational confrontation concluded in 1918 with the downfall of some of the major powers in Europe (the German Empire, the Austria-Hungary Habsburg Monarchy, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Bulgaria). The dynastic principles of rule—which had shaped European politics over millennia—collapsed and were replaced by the ideals of democracy and of popular sovereignty (Snyder, 2011).

The overall instability of the new political systems, worsened by the harsh effects of the economic recession of 1920 and the generalised discontent with what the First World War had inflicted upon the defeated, began to exacerbate social dissatisfaction. The growing discontent led to the rise of Fascism in Italy, of Salazarism in Portugal, and of National Socialism in Germany. The increased global tensions and the conflicting political and social ideologies that divided Europe and its main powers began to spread around the world. By 1931, Spain had been equally radicalised and divided into different factions. These groups, known as the Republicans and the Nationalists, would ultimately steer the country into a Civil War. This was also the preface to what would, eight years later, become the biggest and most destructive War in all of recorded human history (Snyder, 2011).

Ideologies leading to war

Over the past decades, historians have described the Spanish Civil War as “a struggle between leftist revolution and rightist counter-revolution” (Payne, 2012, p. 231), as the fighting groups had different interests and dissimilar ideological dimensions that could be conveniently paired into the opposing political spectrums. The conflicting factions can be separated as follows:

The Republicans—pejoratively referred to as leftists or the reds—were formed by the Popular Front, which was in turn was formed by the coalition of republican parties: the Republican Left and the Republican Union. The alliance was also supported by the Spanish Socialist Labour Party, the Marxist-Leninists of the Communist Party of Spain, the Marxist Unification Labour Party, the Syndicalist Party, the Catalonia Left Nationalists, and the Nationalist Basque Party, all of which had communist, socialist, or anarchic origins. The Republicans were also supported by several groups and civilian and trade union leaders, who at the time were fighting for the labour movement and looking for social revolution in Spain. Altogether, the group’s main objective was to replace the monarchical and religious systems in an attempt to modernise the country and overthrow centuries of conservative rule in Spain.

On the other hand, the Nationalists, referred to as the right counter-revolutionaries, and also known as rightists or fascists, were sustained by a group of high military commanders, in coalition with the fascist Spanish Falange (Phalanx) and the Carlists, a monarchical-religious group who was fighting against the advances of liberalism in Spain. Furthermore, the Nationalist faction was also supported by monarchical, religious, and conservative groups, as well as innumerable civilians, who feared, amongst other things, religious persecution, the destruction of their religious convictions, and the communist ideals of 'proletarian revolution', which would have threatened their social and economic positions (Payne, 2012).

This concoction of dissimilar political ideologies began to affect innumerable facets of Spanish cultural and social life. The governmental and social systems began to fracture, issues arose among social classes, religious supporters began to divide, and political antagonism grew. These aggravated ideological positions encouraged a radicalised view on reality, and thus the contest between opposing notions, such as dictatorship versus democracy, revolution versus counterrevolution, and fascism versus communism, commenced (Juliá, 1999).

In April 1931, the Spanish Second Republic was proclaimed by the Republican coalition after a democratic election. But after four years of destabilisation and governmental changes, which had been worsened by political persecution and crimes against the conservative opposition, a proclamation was made by the board of Nationalist generals against the Popular Front. The pronunciamento, published on 17 July 1936, turned into a coup. The failed attempt to take over the government was met with hostility from organised civil Republican militias (Payne, 2012), and thus a civil war erupted.

The conflict, which had been characterised by strong international ideological components from the beginning, quickly intensified and had immediate responses from all of the major powers of Europe. The fascist regimes in Germany and Italy, as well as the Salazaristas of Portugal, sent military assistance and soldiers to support the Nationalists, while the Republicans received aid from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and what was known as the International Brigades: thousands of foreign volunteers who went to the country to fight the war "against fascism". In an attempt to avoid further complications in the already complex political situation on the continent, Great Britain and France maintained a policy of Non-Intervention. The course of the Civil War divided all of Spain and Europe (Aróstegui, 1996). The number and severity of atrocities committed by both factions, which included executions and forced disappearances, are still widely discussed today.

Lastly, after almost four years of fighting, on 1 April 1939, General Francisco Franco declared the end of the conflict and the victory of the Nationalists. The report from Franco's headquarters stated: "On this day, the Red Army (being) captive and disarmed, the National troops have reached their last military objectives. The war is over" (1939).

The signing of the document by Franco—a military general who had advanced through the ranks throughout the war—would be followed by years of death and destruction in Spain: the document established Franco's power as a totalitarian dictator who would rule the country with an iron fist until the day of his death on 20 November 1975.

Collective memory and the reconstruction of a new Spain

Since the beginning of the war, the eradication of the opponents and their ideologies was encouraged by both fighting factions. But as the Francoist forces seized more and more localities around the country, their leader began to put into action an ambitious plan to construct the symbols and reconstruct the memories that would legitimise his regime and of all of his supporters in the future. The process through which a different collective memory began to be created aimed to change the way in which the past, the present, and the future were narrated, and to transform everything that related to society, culture, and the identity of Spain (Sanz, 2014).

The construction of these new collective principles was originally initiated during the conflict, as the exaltation of Franco as an all-mighty military leader and saviour of Spain was used to attract supporters and fighters. His figure became attached to objective manifestations and appeared in posters, pamphlets, and the media all over Spain (Assman, 1995). These propagandistic tactics were used to define and determine affiliation with him and the Nationalist cause. Along the same line, the destruction of the symbolic and memorial presence of the Republicans in every town or village under Franco's control was encouraged by removing every statue, building name, or street sign that related to the Republican opposition (Sanz, 2014). Both private and public life began to slowly be shaped and defined by the creation of a normative self-image on which the country and its society could be united and identified (Assman, 1995). This included the usage of uniforms, the practice of saluting with the right arm, and the adoption of "Cara al Sol" as an anthem, among other things (Sanz, 2014, p.9). But as the war came to an end, the victors were faced with a bigger and more complex challenge: the attempt to rewrite history and secure their power all across Spain.

Just as the beginning of the twentieth century would be evoked as a period of rapid socio-political and economic transformations, its second decade would later be remembered for the creation and adoption of a new and devastating model of engaging in war. Originated during the First World War and referred to as "total war", this new approach to armed conflict no longer confined the aggressions to rural trenches, or to the objectives of attacking the enemy's armies, their industrial zones, or their communication facilities. In an attempt to weaken morale, deteriorate labour forces, and increase general and massive destruction, "total war" irrupted into domestic life and placed civilians in the middle of the armed conflict (Hobsbawm, 2013).

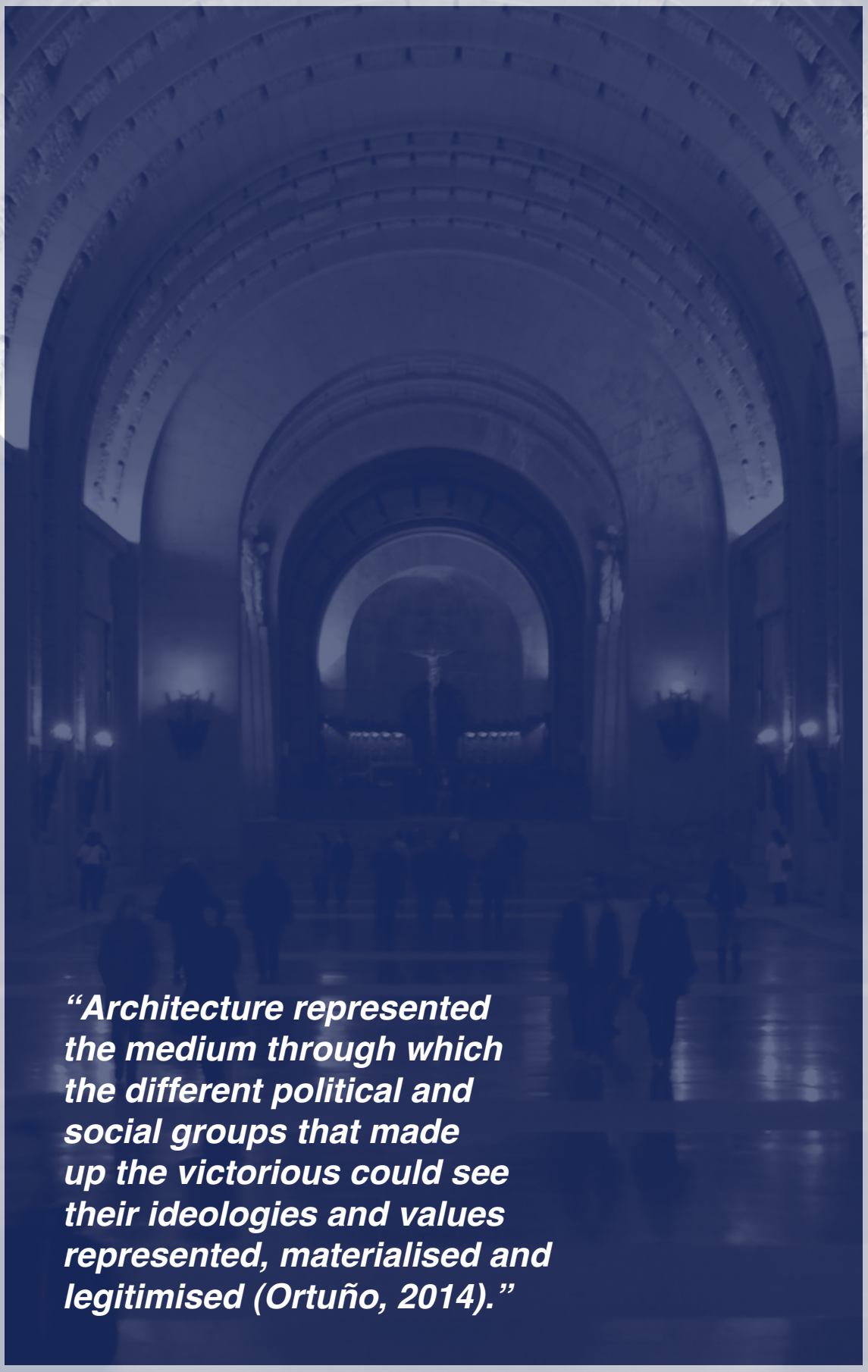
As the level of inflictions that these assaults produced on the enemy were noticeable, the different factions of the Civil War engaged in the model and began to target towns like Brunete or Belchite (Ortuño, 2014). Furthermore, the entire conflict had been used as a testing ground for the war machinery of Germany and Italy, who had both been involved in the conflict to support the Nationalist cause. The bombings of civilian populations—such as Guernica in April 1937—were reinforced by the powers of the Axis, as they served as models for the development of technological and strategic tactics, which they would eventually put into action during the Second World War (Ortuño, 2014). By April 1939, Spain had been devastated.

In an attempt to exalt and annihilate the different memories of what had really happened, the evolutionary and symbolic processes in which history and memory interacted had to be conveniently distorted (Nora, 2010). Shattered by combat and depleted of its infrastructure and of its human capital, the country had to be urgently reconstructed under a novel lieux de mémoire. As the triumphant Nationalists were faced with entire cities and towns in ruins, the creation of a new and more powerful Spain became a moral obligation, equally as important as the material reconstruction of the country. Therefore, in his first meeting as Head of State, Francisco Franco exhorted the Spanish population "to work!" as "peace, far from resting, meant waging the last and definitive battles, those on which raising the country and putting it back on the tracks depend" (Box, 2012).

Reconstruction would not only serve as a legitimising tool for the regime, but also as a transcendental tool that would save morale and provide "the physical support of the spiritual" (Renan, 1992, p. 10). The idea of a New Spain was based on a sentiment, and the common grief that the war had inflicted on all of its population. Franco's demagogic purposes included the rebuilding of Spain into a superpower, one that would equal the imperial reign of the Catholic Monarchs of yore in strength and glory (Lynn, 2007). Architecture represented the medium through which the different political and social groups that made up the victorious side could see their ideologies and values represented, materialised, and legitimised (Ortuño, 2014).

The Valley of the Fallen: an undeniable allegory to Fascism

Franco viewed art and especially architecture as political instruments with military and propaganda value that would serve him and the State in all of its purposes (Lynn, 2007). By objectivising the war and his victory with material culture, the leader would be able to change collective memory and transform history (Assman, 1995). The architectural endeavour began by prioritising the building of monuments for the commemoration of his victory and the remembrance of those who died during what he called "his Glorious Crusade" (Lynn, 2007).



(Dubiel 2008 / CC BY-SA 3.0)

"Architecture represented the medium through which the different political and social groups that made up the victorious could see their ideologies and values represented, materialised and legitimised (Ortuño, 2014)."

After presiding over a victory parade to celebrate the first anniversary of his triumph, Franco led a select group of guests—including the ambassadors from Germany, Italy, and Portugal, as well as the main leaders of the Phalanx and the Minister of the Army—to the Sierra de Guadarrama, where the construction of the Valley of the Fallen was ordered in an official decree (Sanz, 2014):

> The dimension of our Crusade, the heroic sacrifices that our victory holds and the transcendence that it holds for the future of Spain are epic and cannot be perpetuated by the simple monuments with which they usually commemorate in towns and cities the salient facts of our History and the glorious episodes of their children. It is necessary that the stones that rise have the greatness of ancient monuments, that defy time and oblivion, and which constitute a place for meditation and rest in which future generations will pay tribute and admiration to those who bequeathed for a better Spain. (Cuelgamuros, 2017)

The project for the Valley of the Fallen had been developed by the Director of Architecture, Pedro Muguruza, and was later completed by Diego Méndez in a Classicist style, which was influenced by the Fascist and Nazi architecture of the time. This style favoured the construction of immense complexes for the organisation of mass acts, public rituals, and martial ceremonies, and this served the purpose of solemnising demonstrations, displaying the regime's power, and further legitimising their political causes among the population (Ortuño, 2014). For this reason, the monumentality of the Valley of the Fallen had to be overwhelming, and thus the dimensions and numbers that make up the site are very impressive.

The total area in which the Valley of the Fallen was constructed covers more than 1,300 hectares of land, surrounded by over 25 kilometres of wall. It included the construction of a 150-meter-high cross that weighs more than 200,000 tons, under which a Catholic basilica was erected. Cut into the southern part of the mountain side, the religious building—currently standing at an average size of 206 meters long by 40 meters high—had to be reduced in size in order to avoid competing with Saint Peter's Basilica, which is located in the Holy See in Vatican City (Robledo, 2017). The esplanade, which led directly to the entrance surrounded by a semi-circular portico of arches, sits over 130,000 cubic metres of rubble obtained from the excavations in the mountain. The esplanade totals an area of 30,000 square metres. The complex also includes a Benedictine monastery, a residential area for friars, a large library, and a funicular (Sanz, 2014). Altogether, its construction would take more than ten years to complete.

A couple of days before the official inauguration of the site on 1 April 1959, Franco wrote a letter to the family of Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of the Spanish Phalanx who had been executed by the Republicans during the Civil War. In the letter, Franco offered a space within the new basilica for the reburial of Rivera. According to the dictator, the place corresponded "to him among our glorious Fallen" (Zavala, 2013, p. 40). On the

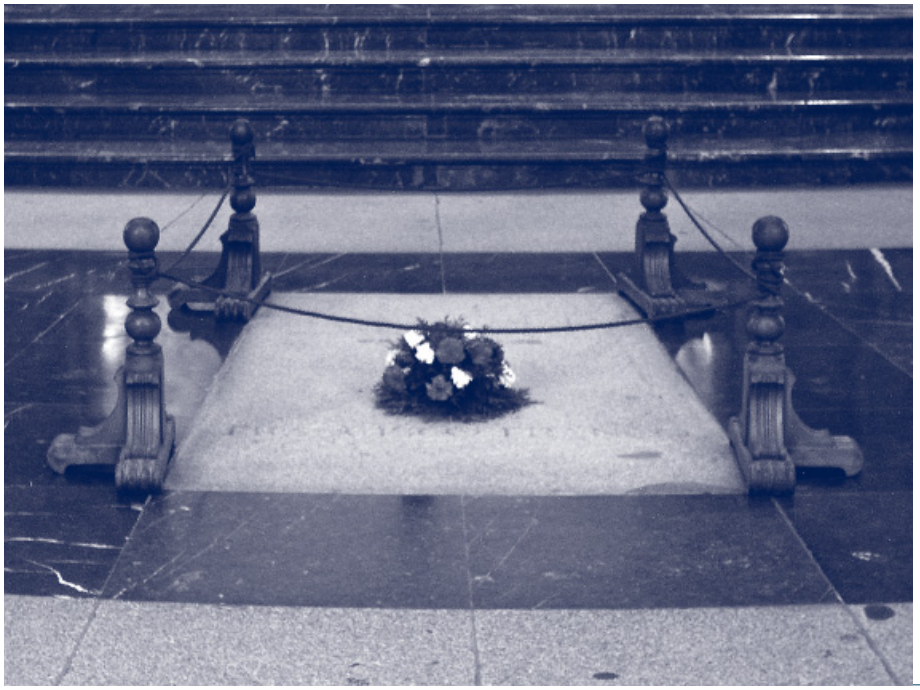


Figure 2. *The tomb of Francisco Franco (Svensson 2005 / CC BY-SA 3.0)*

morning of the 30th of March, members of the Phalanx and Franco's private guard transferred the coffin, originally buried in the Escorial, to the Valley of the Fallen. The leader was deposited in front of the main altar of the crypt, under a granite tomb marked with the inscription Jose Antonio (Casanova, 2017).

20 years after the official inauguration of the Valley of the Fallen, on 20 November 1975, Francisco Franco died. The recently proclaimed King, Juan Carlos I, decreed that he should be buried in the complex, right behind the altar of the basilica (Sueiro, 1976). This event would mark the end of one of the longest dictatorships of the twentieth century, one which resulted in more than 350,000 executions (Mir & Luque, 2014) and over 30,000 forced disappearances (Macé, 2012). After almost 40 years in command, Franco and his fascist regime had turned Spain into the country with the second highest rate of forced disappearances and mass graves in the world (elplural.com, 2017).

Controversies and proposals

The controversies surrounding the Valley of the Fallen relate to its enormous symbolic burdens, and they present a series of issues that have been debated about during the past decades. In the 1950s, the Francoist propaganda machine had tried to appropriate the term reconciliation to modify the symbolism of the site (Moreno Garrido, 2010). To do so, from 1959 to 1983, the corpses of 33,847 victims

from both sides of the conflict were transferred from provinces all across Spain into the Valley of the Fallen. The thousands of bodies were deposited in individual and collective columbarium and buried within the cruise and chapel of the basilica (derechos.org, 2011). According to other sources, the bodies were transferred to the site with the sole intention of filling the colossal crypts and not as an attempt to make amends with the past (Junquera, 2017).

According to 19 data sheets kept at the site, the following massive transfers took place: in 1959, 11,329 corpses were transported before the official opening; in 1961, 6,607 corpses were transferred; and in 1968, 2,919 corpses were transferred. The venture was carried out on the orders of the Minister of the Interior and the President of the Council of National Monuments, who requested the collaboration of the civil government authorities for the removal of the bodies. Altogether, the transfers amounted to 491 removals and reburials between the year of its inauguration and 1983. According to the records, out of these numbers, 21,423 are identified and 12,410 are unknown victims (derechos.org, 2011), making the Valley of the Fallen "the biggest mass grave of Spain" (Fernandez Ferrándiz, 2011).

But the controversies don't only revolve around the high number of victims buried at the site; they are also related to the origins of their remains. Recent investigations have revealed that more than 22,000 of those victims were Republicans or victims of repression, executed by orders of the dictator and his regime. A family member of one of the victims buried in the Valley famously stated: "Uncle Pepe was taken away from home and shot. That's not a fallen. That's a murder" (Felis, 2016). Equally, the majority of the relatives of the victims consider the fact that the victims are buried next to Francisco Franco to be a major insult to their memory. Eventually, an investigation led by Catalan Professor Joan Pinyol revealed that at least 500 of the corpses were transferred without consent from their relatives (Barcala, 2009). This led to a series of legal contests to exhume the bodies.

However, the removal of the corpses presents conservation-related problems for the structure of the site. First, regarding the claims for the return of the remains, a commission of experts deemed the individual identification, exhumation, and devolution of bodies to their relatives impossible due to the deterioration of the crypts and the quantity of remains located within the crypts (derechos.org, 2011). Secondly, according to Professor Francisco Ferrándiz from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid:

> The exhumation of corpses would be impossible since they would have ended up forming part of the very structure of the building, since they were used to fill the cavities of the crypts... (Additionally) Thanks to the effect of humidity, they would have become an "indissoluble collective corpse. (2001, p.15)

Figure 3. *Esplanade of the Valley of the Fallen (Dubiel 2008 / CC BY-SA 3.0)*

But as the legal issues regarding the burial of the victims are addressed and resolved, the Valley of the Fallen presents an even bigger issue: the majority of the population still believes that the Valley of the Fallen is a monument for the victors and a representative landmark of Franco's regime and of fascism in Spain (Robledo, 2017). As the location of Franco's and Jose Antonio's mausoleums, the Valley has become a centre of pilgrimage for the nostalgic followers of the dictatorship and the growing number of right-wing supporters living in Spain and the rest of Europe. Each year on the 20th of November, in celebration of Franco's death, religious acts and political ceremonies are held in the esplanade, and at night, the monumental cross that oversees the Valley is ceremoniously lit (Sanz, 2014).

The Valley of the Fallen has been rendered an anomaly by heritage experts, firstly because in no other country in the world are fascist leaders being publicly mourned and their regimes symbolically celebrated or remembered with monumental heritage. This incongruity can be explained by the fact that unlike other previous dictatorships—either defeated in war or toppled through internal conflicts—Spain went through a process of democratic transition right after Franco died. This gave rise to several delicate issues relating to the preservation of collective memories, ideologies, and the conservation of built heritage. When dictatorships do not fall in a precipitate manner, priorities such as the reconstruction, destruction, or reinventing of history or heritage are not immediately addressed. Professor Jesús de Andrés Sanz,

an expert in Spanish heritage, has highlighted the fact that "the postponed problems (of dealing with heritage and ideologies) remain unresolved, and, once the convulsive waters of democratic transition and consolidation have been reassured, they reappear over time" (2014, p.9). Furthermore, the site is considered the only one in the world where members of both sides of an armed conflict are buried, raising even more issues among the relatives of the victims and the supporters of the monument who want to keep it intact.

Thus, on 27 May 2011, a Commission of Experts for the Future of the Valley of the Fallen was created to analyse and address some of these issues, and to develop a report containing proposals for the resignification of the monument. Among their suggestions, the Committee advised to remove the remains of Francisco Franco from the Valley, and to transfer those of Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera from his privileged position next to the altar to one of the crypts. This proposal was delivered in order to ensure that the mausoleum becomes a space for memory, and that the corpse of the dictator stops tormenting the relatives of the Republicans who were buried there (Martin, 2017). But until today, the proposal has not been applied, since authorisation of the Church is necessary to remove the bodies. According to canon law, the state has no authority over the basilica, and thus, since 2011, every subsequent legal attempt to remove Franco from the Valley of the Fallen has failed. The removal of the hundreds of Republicans who were also buried in the Valley without permission has also been deemed economically impossible, especially since the country has been suffering a massive financial crisis. Some have even suggested that the lack of lobbying and support from the political parties in charge to remove the dictator is connected to the fact that according to the National Heritage Office of Spain, the monument receives more than two million euros of income every year (Martin, 2017). But perhaps the inability and powerlessness to change the overall meaning and symbolism of the Valley of the Fallen, until now, is due to larger and more deeply rooted matters.

Conclusion

The Valley of the Fallen, with all of its meanings and relationships to ideologies and collective memory, will remain a fundamental challenge as long as the site maintains its current status as a representative landmark of Franco's regime. In order to modify its symbolic meaning and its current use, the Valley of the Fallen has to go through a complete process of resignification.

First of all, it would be essential to strip the place of any ideological or political connotations. This would allow the complex to be converted it into a centre for meditation. A site "of affirmation of coexistence, democracy and human right… (and) of rejection of war, violence and dictatorship" (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2011). To do so, other actions could be implemented, including the creation of a Research Centre and a

permanent exhibition that could collect and display the testimonies and original records that testify to the thousands of deaths contained within the monument.

This centre should also explain the history of the site—from its creation to the present—and expose the reasons and ideologies behind its construction. In this regard, it would be necessary to promote and maintain an objective and impartial view of the entire range of meanings and symbolisms that surround the Valley: the Civil War, its ideological forces, the victory of Franco, the years of dictatorship, and the creation of a collective memory that generated heroes and ignored the vanquished. These explanations should also include one for the pre-eminent place that Jose Antonio and Francisco Franco were given within the basilica.

Furthermore, a civic environment could be encouraged through the promotion of artistic installations or performances that could help to re-signify the monument as a place of remembrance for all of the victims of violence. By objectively re-signifying the Valley of the Fallen, the centrality of the victims would be highlighted, and thus, the visitors would be able to reflect on the site and how this landmark has related and still relates to the history of Spain.

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Figures

Figure 1: By Jorge Díaz Bes [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons
< https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Valle_de_los_caidos.jpg>

Figure 2 & Figure p.173: Sebastian Dubiel [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons
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Marina Freckmann

The Soviet War Memorial, Treptower Park, Berlin

How the ideology and propaganda of a memorial helped shape public memory of East Germans during the German Democratic Republic

Introduction

Monuments and memorials play a significant role in shaping historical narratives and discourse surrounding past events. They are inherently entrenched in ideology and symbols, and are intended by the creators to influence public interpretation of the event being recorded. Memorials thus serve as physical representations of history that are fabricated by a limited viewpoint. Yet, through their presence in open and public spaces, they give the illusion that they may be interpreted openly and freely by those viewing them. Without explicitly promoting critical interpretation, if memorials are complemented by a matching political discourse, they can be used as tools to contribute to producing and even changing a certain public memory. Public memory can be defined as "how society remembers, what it remembers, and who it remembers" (Cohen, 2008, p.547). The Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park, Berlin, is one such emblem that dictated the how, what, and who of East German public memory during the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The specific and unique position of this ideologically laced memorial within a sociopolitical climate that was forming a new identity under the GDR is one that would nurture and promote the narrative of liberation by the Soviets from Nazi fascism.

As Ignatieff wrote in his essay on *Soviet War Memorials*, "War memorials function not only to make the past bearable again; they function to make it usable for the future" (1984, p.161). This tactic is apparent in the Treptower memorial, whose symbols and images, although they did not explicitly name East Germans, were universal enough to:

> Afford later leaders the opportunity to use the visuals to support the argument that the East German populace had been part of the Soviet resistance effort, and thus its version of homeland (Crimmins, 2011, p.57).

Perhaps it was in preparing for the future relationship with citizens of Germany as well as the German nation that the design of the Soviet memorial was chosen to focus on the villain of Hitler without grouping in the German people. As Stangl elaborated, "By omitting the German people entirely, the memorial avoided making a statement regarding the link between the German state and assigning guilt to the German people" (2003, p.225). This fact is tantamount in contributing to and even initiating a certain memory in East Berlin, where German observers would not be forced to group themselves together with Nazism, and instead could partake in the shared memory of resistance to Hitler's fascism and the liberation by the Soviets, as is depicted symbolically and literally throughout the site. I would argue that this contributed to a *collective memory* of those East Germans, as it is defined by Assmann. Assmann's theoretical work describes a group who "conceives their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past" (1995, p.127).

Understanding the context of the creation of this memorial and the meaning of the symbols of which it is made up is crucial to further understanding the effect its presence had on the East German people under the GDR, and the ideology that may have transformed public and collective memory. Equally as significant for understanding the political ideology of the site and its influence is interpreting the preservation of the memorial post-German reunification, and the installation of informational signs around the site. What follows will be an attempt to contextualise and bring into focus the political propagandistic ideology of the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park, Berlin, and its effect on East German memory, as well as the more recent preservation and reevaluation of the site as an element of the historical past.

Context and description of the site

In April of 1945, for nearly one month, the final battle of the Second World War, *the Battle of Berlin*, was fought. The battle not only resulted in the surrender of the Nazis to the Soviets and Allied powers, but also in the death of approximately 250 thousand people, 70,000 of whom were Soviet soldiers (Remme, 2011). In the aftermath of war, shock was felt around the world, and in Europe—particularly Germany—a "far-reaching legacy - of loss, of mourning, of disorientation, of bitterness and of hatred hung in the air" (Bessel, 2005, p. 195). Berlin was in ruins, both physically and emotionally. Refugees wandered without food and without anywhere to go (Remme, 2011). The social and political landscape was unrecognisable and the stage had been set for a complete remolding of the German nation. At this time, the division of Germany and the city of Berlin was being put into effect by the different Allied powers. This agreement on the division of Germany, as well as the city of Berlin, had already been

Figure 1. *View of the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park, Berlin (*© Andreas Steinhoff 2005*)*

established during the London Protocol of autumn 1944, and it would split the jurisdiction and control between the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union (GHDI, 1959), and eventually France. The Soviets would have control over the districts of northeastern Berlin, wherein the neighbourhood of Treptow and Treptower Park lie. It is within this broader picture that the foundation for the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park emerged.

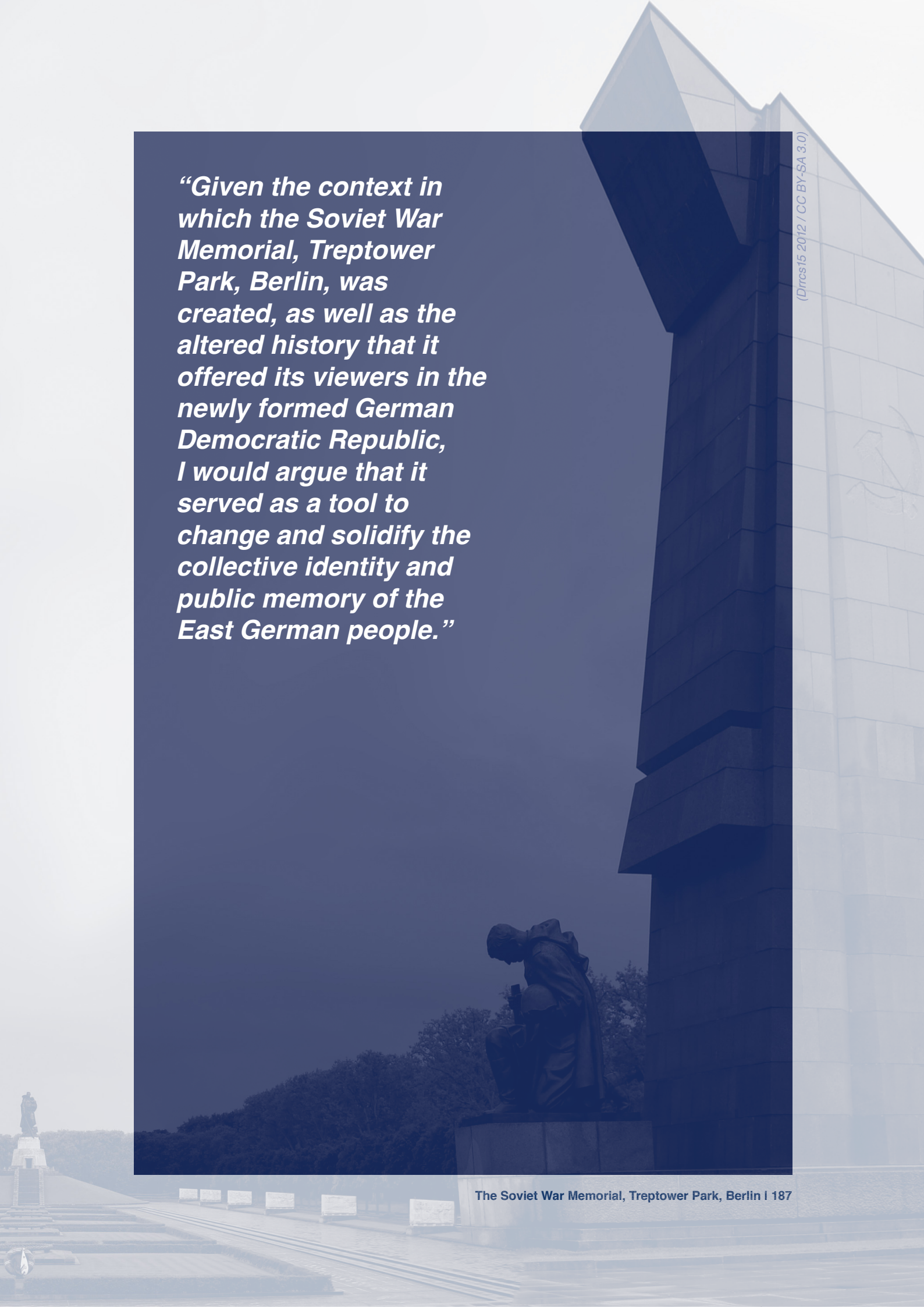
In the months following the end of the war, the Soviet Military Administration (SMAD) in Berlin commissioned three Soviet memorial and burial sites "to commemorate victory and honor the dead" (Stangl, 2003, p. 217). Among them, the one in Treptower Park would be the largest and would house the remains of between 5,000 and 7,000 Soviet soldiers (Crimmins, 2011). As the Soviets were the acclaimed defeaters of Hitler who would remain in charge of at least part of Berlin, and due to the huge amount of deceased Soviet soldiers needing burial, the plans for these memorials were not questioned. A design competition for the Treptower memorial was held in 1946, and a "Russian team of architect Jakow Borissowitsch Belopolski, sculptor Jewgeni Wiktorowitsch Witschetish, engineer Sarra Samuilowna Walerius, and painter Alexander Andrejewitsch Gorpenko" were selected to carry out the initiative (Crimmins, 2011, p. 55). The location of the site was strategic in that it should not only be placed in an area that would be under Soviet control, but it should also be removed from other "historic structures testifying to Prussian and German history", which would have taken away from the Soviet's "efforts to appear as liberators" (Stangl, 2003, p. 217). Removing the

Soviet site from the surrounding memorialisation of a prior era of German history would be to ensure a clear focus on the message that was intended to be conveyed.

The vast nine hectare layout of the memorial complex, which is situated between "Puschkinallee to the north and the street Am Treptower Park to the south" (Berlin.de, n.d.), is intricately detailed, with each aspect containing symbols that help visitors to read the structures and remember the events in a certain light. An emphasis is clearly placed on the heroic efforts and sacrifices of the Red Army to defeat National Socialism. There are no references to the German nation or the German people as a whole, but rather exclusively to Nazism. The tone of the memorial is somber in its function as a burial ground for 5,000 to 7,000 of the 70,000 Soviet soldiers who died during the Battle of Berlin, but also strongly nationalistic in promoting the Soviet's victory and all-mightiness (Jirásek, 2017). The site itself was designed within the wooded Treptower Park so that it is not visible from the busy parallel roads. From either adjacent road, one enters the memorial grounds through a grand archway, each with "an inscription acknowledging the heroes who died liberating the 'socialist homeland'" (Stangl, 2003, p. 218), and with these arches the journey to experience the memorial begins (Fig 1).

The main elements of the monument include four statues and sixteen sarcophagi with script and bas-reliefs, and each is meant to be read, both symbolically and literally, with a certain ideological understanding of the Soviet Union's role in the Second World War and in defeating Hitler's Fascism. As one enters the memorial complex, the view of a statue of a weeping mother, *motherland*, comes into view. This is a statue of a traditionally dressed Russian woman with her head bent who appears to be mourning over a lost son. However, the symbolism here allows one to interpret the subject of her mourning—for one lost soldier, for all Russians, for the *motherland*, for the innocence of European youth etc.—for themselves, and it is thus relatable to myriad visitors. This motherland sculpture is quite modest in stature, and while the entrance archways evoke a feeling of victory, she elicits a feeling of loss—but a loss that must be suffered in order to overcome the enemy. After viewing the motherland statue, if one turns 90 degrees, the rest of the memorial comes into view. Continuing up a pathway surrounded on either side by many birch trees—the Russian national tree—one approaches two "massive granite pylons representing lowered Soviet flags" (Stangl, 2003, p. 218). Two bronze statues of Soviet soldiers kneel in front of the pylons, facing each other, their heads bowing low. Already, these grand symbols evoke a deep sense of national pride and mourning of those lost during the war.

Continuing southeast down the steps and onto a vast lawn under which the soldiers remains lie, and which is bordered on either side by eight sarcophagi, each covered in etched bas-reliefs of wartime scenes and wartime quotes by Stalin, the symbolism further unfolds. On either side of the lawn, the sarcophagi retain mirroring depictions that follow the wartime story to which the Soviets referred as the Great Patriotic War. On the north



"Given the context in which the Soviet War Memorial, Treptower Park, Berlin, was created, as well as the altered history that it offered its viewers in the newly formed German Democratic Republic, I would argue that it served as a tool to change and solidify the collective identity and public memory of the East German people."

side the text is in Russian, and on the south side the text is in German (Stangl, 2003), which further shows the foreseen and intended dual audience. All eight bas-reliefs are different, but they evoke similar sentiments of Soviet civilian victimhood in the face of Nazi aggression and violence, before a triumph in their fight for liberation. For example, one of the first bas-relief depictions is of "airplanes bombing the Soviet countryside and cities, and people running from their homes to the woods and taking up weapons" (Jirásek, 2017). Another sarcophagus portrays "a row of soldiers with raised rifles...behind them a flag with the image of Lenin and the Kremlin represents the state and/or the party, depending on one's interpretation" (Stangl, 2003, p. 223). On another sarcophagus (Fig 2), there is a scene depicting several women and an older man in traditional dress giving thanks to the Soviet soldiers through handshakes and by offering them bouquets of flowers. Thus, the message is conveyed—the Soviet soldiers were heroes and perhaps the whole of Europe should be committed to remembering their legacy as liberators from the vicious tragedies that were inflicted upon humanity by German National Socialism. The coupling of the bas-reliefs with quotes from Stalin on the sarcophagi further contributes to the Stalinist vision of the liberation of the whole of Europe. Although the Soviet perception of Stalin may have altered throughout more recent history, these quotes can be seen as relevant to the specific time and in particular to the war discourse during the Second World War. In the selection of quotations on the sarcophagi, Stalin is recorded as referring explicitly to Hitler and *Hitler's Germany* as the source of war and oppression (Stangl, 2003, p. 224). Once again, the German citizens are excluded from the explicit condemnation of evil.

Passing the sarcophagi and the vast lawn, the symbolism continues through to its focal point of a gigantic, 11-meter tall bronze statue of a Soviet soldier on a pedestal (Fig 3). The statue sits on top of a mound of earth, known as a *kurgan—an ancient Russian burial mound* (Stangl, 2003, p. 219). The soldier is clutching a small child in one arm, and with the other arm he holds an enormous sword, which is resting atop a crushed swastika at his feet. Again, the symbols used here allow for a malleable interpretation within the specific message of Soviet liberation. The child's specific symbolic meaning is open for interpretation—does it represent Soviet children, German children, or all future generations? It is noteworthy that the giant figure is portrayed crushing a swastika, which was the defined symbol of Nazi Germany. It reiterates the narrative that the Soviets were liberators from Nazism, and completely separates this from the notion that they were defeaters of the German nation or the German people. This element is crucial in the memorial's location in Berlin, with an audience of German people who could then also cultivate an identity of also having been liberated by the Soviets from Nazi fascism. The significance and importance of this focal point structure is such that it became "an icon of Soviet victory in WWII" (Stangl, 2003, p.215) and was used repeatedly as propaganda throughout the height of the Soviet Union.

Figure 2. *Sarcophagus bas-relief of Prague scene. (Raimond Spekking 2006,* CC BY-SA 3.0)

Contradiction to reality

The trouble with memorials, which is particularly true for this case, is that they often do not paint the whole truth. We can accept that the purpose of memorials is to convey a certain ideology or sentiment from one side of the story, which inherently excludes the holistic account of what may be the complete truth. This becomes problematic when a memorial is used in such a way to promote and perpetuate a memory held by a newly formed society, such as what we see in the case of Treptower Park. It becomes problematic when it in effect changes the public discourse and narrative surrounding a historic event, in this case the Second World War and the relationship of East Germans with the Soviet liberators versus Hitler's National Socialism. In his essay *on Soviet War Memorials,* author Ignatieff (1984, p.158) writes that Soviet memorials are immensely significant in recording the Soviet suffering during WWII. He also discusses how they are part of "an invented tradition in the service of the Soviet state" and, as such, "facilitate forgetting as well as remembering" (1984). In Treptower Park, the facilitation of forgetting other stories, perspectives, and truths from the war period is apparent.

The memorial in Treptower Park deliberately excludes the harsh and violent reality of what took place throughout the Second World War and most intensely during the end of the war at the hands of the Soviet military. In using the sarcophagi to paint a story of the tragedy and hardship that Soviet civilians and soldiers suffered at the hands of the Nazis, the reality becomes systematically altered by excluding the other side of the story. What the sarcophagi depict is not intrinsically

untrue; however, by omitting the suffering of innocent civilians—both Eastern European as well as Germans—at the hands of the Soviets, the creators of the site are altering the full truth. Perhaps one of the most well known series of crimes committed by the Soviet troops against German civilians were the hundreds of thousands of rapes that took place towards the end of the war and even after the war. One documentation of German hospital records reports that towards the end of the war there was an incredible increase in abortion rates, and "it is estimated that up to two million German women were raped ... around 100,000 of them in Berlin" (Remme, 2011). Furthermore, one German journalist working in Berlin during the end of the war documented that in addition to the R.A.F. (British air force) and the U.S. Air Force members who were targeting Hitler, the Soviet "fliers [airplanes] also began to come as far as Berlin" (Schneyder & Lochner, 1967, p. 418). He wrote that those Soviet airplanes flew "low and attack[ed] moving trains of civilians" who were evacuating the city in anticipation of the imminent Soviet approach (Schneyder & Lochner, 1967, p. 418). Additionally, following the Battle of Berlin, tens of thousands German prisoners of war were forced to march to labour camps in the Soviet Union (Schneyder & Lochner, 1967). Is it possible that the German war survivors could have blocked these facts from their memories? Or maybe it is due in part to a larger German guilt complex that author Moeller discusses, suggesting their "commemorative culture allowed Germans only to express collective guilt for what the Nazi state had done to others, leaving them no space to mourn what others had done to them" (2005, p.149).

And this violence was not exclusive to Nazi Germany. Under the Soviet rule, many Soviet citizens and soldiers were targeted and suffered as well. The Soviet Union was not as innocent and peaceful as the memorial might suggest it was. In fact, what is known as the Great Purge (1936-1938), a movement initiated by Stalin to "eliminate his major real and potential political rivals and critics" (Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d), resulted in 19 million Soviet arrests, "a majority of whom either were executed or died in labor camps" (Stangl, 2003, p. 225). Included in these purges were many top military officials and leaders in the armed forces. An estimated twenty million Soviet citizens and soldiers died during the Second World War, either at the front, from starvation, or by war crimes. Some argue that it was due to Stalin's "lack of preparedness for the German invasion" (Stangl, 2003, p.225), his having wiped out military leaders, and his recklessness at the end of the war in storming Berlin, that this toll reached so high.

Certainly none of these horrendous and violent Soviet acts against Soviets or Germans are depicted or mentioned in the Treptower Park site. Thus, the exclusive focus on the Soviet suffering at the hands of Nazi Germany, and the Soviet's heroic role, procures a collective amnesia that omits the harsh truth. In the chaotic aftermath of the war, and during the full power of the GDR, under which fewer and fewer survivors spoke about their true memories, this memorial further served as a propagandistic alteration of the truth. So often has this trend occurred throughout history that we might almost perceive it as human nature to exclude chunks of historical truth from public memory. It might be

too difficult and confusing to remember all of the horrific tragedies, particularly when the political regime chooses one story to reiterate, and thus victims and survivors tend to go along with them.

Control of the memorial

When discussing the *collective memory* of a certain group of people, Assmann underlines that those certain events and points upon which the collective identity is based are necessarily only effective through "cultural formation and institutional communication" (1995, p.129). Institutional communication, that is, political and public discourse, serves to reiterate and support ideology and a shared sense of cultural or national identity. From the opening of the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park in 1949, it was seen as a meeting point for Soviet appreciation and giving thanks for their liberation.

The site was used for commemorative ceremonies, particularly on the 8th of May each year, and officials from both the "Soviet Union and the GDR jointly participated in large-scale" commemorative events (Information Portal to European Sites of Remembrance, n.d.). When May 8 Victory Day (Siegestag) became Liberation Day (Befreiungstag) under the newly formed GDR, a shift toward explicitly including the German people under those as *liberated* occurred (Stangl, 2003). Now that the GDR was in power, they would officially take control of the memorial and those commemorative ceremonies surrounding it. Stangl writes that the Liberation Day ceremony became one of "official pilgrimage for the East German state leadership and state-organized groups of East Berlin residents", and that state leaders spoke, openly offering expressions of "friendship between the German and Soviet peoples" (2003, p. 228). On one occasion, for example, Walter Ulbricht, the Secretary General of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), spoke of Stalin as the "pioneer and standard-bearer of peace throughout the world", and expressed his gratitude toward "General Stalin and the entire Soviet people" for their liberation (Stangl, 2003, p. 222).

As a new state, and one that was quickly viewed with skepticism by many of its citizens, the GDR needed an "employment of myths … to legitimize governmental authority" (Stangl, 2003, p. 228). They therefore used propaganda tactics not only to rally their citizens against the "imperialist West", but also to demonstrate their strong "bond of friendship" with the Soviet Union. Throughout the GDR times, both GDR officials and Soviet officials used the Treptower site as a gathering point to promote political messages. Whereas the message of GDR officials reiterated thanks to "the Soviets for saving their country from Hitler's oppression, 'Soviet generals' stressed the Soviet suffering and their country's great victory" (Jirásek, 2017). Although the tone of their messages varied slightly, the two groups of national leadership sought to rebuild a strong relationship between Germany and the East.

Figure 3. *Statue of Soviet soldier with child - focal point of memorial on the 70 anniversary of the victory day (Kleiner Eisbär 2015 / CC BY-SA 3.0).*

Throughout the GDR times, the memorial was seen and used as propaganda to perpetuate the constructed narrative of East Germans as being liberated by the Soviets, and thus separated from the crimes of Hitler. In the 1980s, however, support for the Soviet Union began to crumble, and "open discussions of the war by survivors and admissions by the Soviet government revealed errors in the narrative" (Stangl, 2003, p. 229-230). Stalin's violence was exposed and people began to speak about and remember more openly the Great Purge that had taken place within the Soviet Union. Due to the emphasis of the memorial on the Soviet people in general as liberators, it was able to withstand the shift in public discourse. It was still a site to remember the war dead, and for the East Germans to acknowledge and remember their so-called liberation by the Soviets.

The memorial after german reunification

When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, many East Berliners attacked symbols and monuments of GDR oppression, such as the

Wall itself, the "Stasi headquarters and, perhaps the Palace of the Republic" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 57). The Soviet War Memorial, however, "had been embraced during the GDR as a more positive stand- in for liberation, hope, and anti-fascist tradition", and so it stood out from the "highly symbolic and politically charged sites in Berlin" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 57). As part of German reunification, the Two Plus Four Agreement between West Germany and the GDR as the two, and the UK, USA, Russia, and France as the four, was signed. As part of this agreement, the "Good Neighbor Treaty" was agreed upon, which stated that both sides would ensure the maintenance of "the other's war memorial and burial sites on their respective territory" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 58). So now, by law, it was Germany's obligation to maintain the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park. During the GDR times, despite the high regard for the Treptower memorial, little to no financial support was given for preserving its condition. The state of the memorial was becoming so poor that in 1998, the Social Democrats (SPD) Faction Leader Klaus Böger claimed that the memorial was in a "catastrophic state", as the Soviet soldier statue physically "threatened to collapse" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 59-60). There was much debate between political leaders as to what to do with the memorial, and whether the restoration was to be funded at a federal or state level, even though it was outstandingly clear that either way they would have to abide by the signed treaty in maintaining it. In October of 2003, the Soviet soldier statue was finally shipped to the island of Rügen for a complete restoration; the restoration took six months to complete and cost 1.35 million Euros (Crimmins, 2011).

In addition to the debate about restoration, disagreements increasingly developed amongst political party leaders as to whether the site should be altered, or even demolished, given its strong socialist and pro-Stalin rhetoric (Crimmins, 2011). Leaders of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU), in particular, were in favor of eliminating at least the Stalin quotations from the site (Crimmins, 2011). In 2003, a compromise was reached between party leaders, and it was decided that "informational boards would be erected at the memorial to explain its historical context" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 61). Eight signs were installed that offer a drier, more ideologically neutral explanation of the creation of the site, as well as the meaning of its various statues and quotations. One sign states:

> The cemetery and memorial create a central place of commemoration for those Soviet soldiers who fell in the battle of Berlin, whose achievements resonate over Berlin and Germany. (Crimmins, 2011, p.62)

Here, no explicit reference to the terms *victory* or *liberation* is made, but rather the acknowledgement of the Soviet army's achievements is noted. The first informational sign explains the "good neighbor" treaty within the Two Plus Four Agreement, which obligates "the federal government and the City of Berlin to preserve the site as it stands" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 62). Therefore, through stating this fact for the public viewers to

read, the government is openly giving their reason for having to preserve and maintain the site. This would suggest that the preservation of the memorial is not necessarily in their political or ideological interest, but rather required by a legal contract.

Several other signs recount the use of the memorial during GDR times "as a ceremonial site for East German politicians and members of communist youth organizations" (Crimmins, 2011, p. 62). Once again, they place the memorial into a factual, historical context. Finally, what perhaps is the most opinionated of all the informational signs is an explanation of one of the sarcophagus texts. Regarding Stalin's quotations, the sign states:

> After the end of the Second World War, Stalin was celebrated by Soviet propaganda as the great strategizer and commander as well as the 'inspiration of all victories,' under whose leadership the 'mother homeland' was defended. (Crimmins, 2011, p.63)

For the quotations, the German government allowed themselves to be subjective, and to classify the reverence of Stalin as one method of Soviet propaganda. These informational signs envelop the memorial in a new political ideology—that of the Federal Republic of Germany reflecting back on its history since the Second World War, and dissociating itself from the Soviet Union while speaking to a newly unified German population. The signs resituate the memorial into a new political and social environment, one that is reflective yet at the same time attempting to be historically factual, ebbing away from the persuasive narrative the memorial once painted.

Conclusion

Public memory and collective identity are shaped by a society's acceptance of a defining shared history. They set the tone for public discourse and contribute to a narrative, which in turn reaffirms the truth of that society's claim to identity. Given the context in which the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park was created, as well as the altered history that it offered its viewers in the newly formed German Democratic Republic, I would argue that it served as a tool to change and solidify the collective identity and public memory of the East German people. It is not exclusively through the presence of the memorial, but through the use of it by both the Soviet and GDR states-people, that it became such a propagandistic and manipulative element. It is due to unique circumstances—the chaos and non- nationhood after the Second World War in Germany, coupled with the Soviet Union's defeat of Hitler's National Socialism, and merged with the birth of the German Democratic Republic—that the memorial's propagandistic and ideological message proved to be so persuasive.

Because of the design of the memorial, with its intentional abstention from placing blame upon the German nation as well as the German people, the creators were able

Figure 4. *Central vista of the Soviet War Memorial.* (Drrcs15 2014/ CC BY-SA 4.0)

to facilitate the possibility for those Germans to group themselves together with the victims of National Socialism, and allowed them to participate in the memory of Soviet liberation. Due to the monument's wide and immense inclusion of Soviet citizens, as well as the possibility of other Eastern Europeans as well as Germans to be included within the dialogue promoted by the monument, it could be used more broadly and effectively as a tool of propaganda.

After the Berlin Wall came down and the Two Plus Four Agreement was signed, the narrative of the memorial changed. The preservation of the site, along with the addition of informational signs in the early 2000s, further contributed to a new interpretation of and relationship with the memorial for the newly unified German government. The installation of these informational signs, as well as the emphasis of the site as a burial ground, illustrates the transformation of the mindset from GDR times to post-unification, wherein the government no longer wishes to promote such a strong and close tie with the Soviet Union. As a person wanting to learn about a certain history over a period of time, the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park proves to be an exceptional example of how the discourse surrounding ideological monuments transforms with the change of government and politics. Today, the memorial still serves as a meeting point for those wishing to gather for the May 8th Liberation Day commemoration, but perhaps is more relevant as a cultural and historical site to be critically read within a beautiful tree-filled park next to the River Spree.

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Figures

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Paola Fontanella Pisa

Social, Cultural and Political Implications of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial's Interpretations

Introduction

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial, known in Japan as the *Hiroshima Genbaku Dome,* represents a symbol of peace on a global scale, although it was achieved by means of the first nuclear weapon being used on humans. As the only remaining building that can be directly linked to this stage of human history, it plays a fundamental role in the process of shaping Japan's national identity, afflicted by many social, political, and cultural ambiguities. As a consequence, it also represents an important tool to understand the dynamics of current international relations between Japan and other countries. This paper aims to analyse these factors in relation to the heritage site, and its implications on a national and international level.

During the last 150 years, Japanese history has been marked by several changes as a result of the end of the period of national isolation in 1868 (*Sakoku*). From that year onward, Japan opened to Western culture, and an era of political, economic, social, and cultural change started (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 13). Setting the beginning of the ambiguous opposition between Japan and the West, these years have been particularly influenced by three main events: the beginning of Meiji Restoration, the end of the Second World War, and the end of the Cold War (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 13). Particularly relevant for this paper are the events related to the end of the Second World War and the post-war reconstruction. These years have seen the rebirth of a defeated Japan under

the directives of the United States (Ōe, 1994, p.6). Irremediably affected by the dropping of the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese community had to define a new identity, while accepting the fall of nationalism in favour of democratic ideals.

Because of the complicated dynamics shaping this delicate scenario, the reconstruction of post-war Japan is characterised by many contradictions, both at a national and international level. This paper aims to define these contradictions and to analyse them in relation to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome). The site is representative of the paradoxes regarding Japan's approach to the nuclear disaster, to the West, and to the collective memory of the Second World War (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p.46). Although the transformation of the interpretation of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial towards its consideration as the "global shrine for peace" (Logan & Reeves, 2009, p.6), the inevitable link with the atrocities of the Second World War and the use of nuclear power cannot be denied. A World Heritage Site since 1996, its nomination to UNESCO's World Heritage List represents the culmination of years of discussion concerning its interpretation (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p.35) and challenges its meaning as a shared heritage (Logan & Reeves 2009, p.11).

The paper starts by providing the theoretical background on which it is based, and then proceeds with a presentation of the case study of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. Subsquently, an analysis of the direct interpretations of the site is provided, addressing its history and its conservation measures and their implications on Japanese society. The paper then continues to review the international concerns about the inscription of the site in UNESCO's World Heritage List. Linking to the different meanings of the site in Japanese and American collective memories, the discourse continues with an interpretation of Japanese literature and cinema, as representative of post-war society's constructed identity, based on the events of 6 August 1945. Before concluding, the paper offers a further look into the development of the discourse surrounding nuclear power from 1945 to today, and its implications for Japan's identity and relationship with other countries.

Theoretical background

Proceeding with the analysis of the role of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) in the process of shaping post-war Japan's national identity, an introduction to the socio-political situation of this conflicted country is needed. In addition, it is important for this chapter to lay the groundwork for the discourse of memorialisation and the role of heritage.

Identity matters

As mentioned above, Japan's opening to the rest of the world in 1868 represents the beginning of *the opposition* with Western countries (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p.14). The initial approach for dealing with the West can be summarised in the expression

wakon yōsai (translated: Japanese spirit, Western science), showing their interest in introducing Western technology while maintaining their traditional culture (Novielli, 2010, p. 77). Despite the apparently clear intentions, this relationship soon developed several ambiguities. The first use of the term "ambiguous" for defining the Japanese identity and Japan's relation with the West was by the Nobel Prize recipient for literature, Ōe Kenzaburō (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p.14). In his Nobel Prize discourse in 1995, titled *Japan, the Ambiguous and Myself*, he describes Japanese ambiguity as an opposition of poles that cause the split of the state of Japan and its people (Ōe, 1995, p. 6). The sudden modernisation on the model of the West without being able to renounce to their traditions (Bienati and Scrolavezza, 2009, p.15) caused Japan to become a country that can be considered neither completely Asian nor Western (Ōe, 1995, p. 6). The title of this discourse itself aims to denounce this uncertainty regarding identity, openly referring to Kawabata Yasunari's Nobel Prize discourse *Japan, the Beautiful and Myself* (1968). In his discourse, Kawabata means to express the essence of Japanese culture as strongly related to a mysticism that cannot be understood by Western countries. In other words, he supports the idea of an incomprehensible and spiritual Japan that does not want to be understood, setting the basis of the *ambiguity* denounced by Ōe (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 186). In his career, Ōe has often discussed the meanings of Hiroshima and the consequences of its tragedies in the post-war reconstruction, becoming one of the most relevant voices in the debate on the unspoken nature of Japan (Utaka, 2009, p.38; Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 180). According to him, the tragedies related to the end of the Second World War and the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima represent a turning point for the *ambiguity* of Japan, as the many changes following the defeat have made the Japanese population waver in their understanding of themselves (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 14). On one side, the unexpected consequences of the nuclear bombing represented a terrible reality that Japan had to deal with. On the other side, with the declaration of defeat, Emperor Hirohito crushed all of the nationalistic ideals that fed the spirits of Japanese soldiers and citizens during the war, as he admitted his human origins. In Japanese tradition, the Emperor was considered a *living god* descending from the sun-goddess *Amaterasu,* and the trust of the nation that served during the war was founded on this belief (Walker, 2016, p. 146). The Emperor's public surrender, confessed Ōe, has caused both humiliation and a sense of freedom, offering his country a new opportunity for rebirth under democratic ideals (Bienati & Scrolavezza 2009, p. 181). It is on this basis that Japan started its physical and social reconstruction and its attempts to reconnect with other countries under US directives, which marks these years as the years of "America's Japan" (Bienati & Scrolavezza 2009, p.13).

Collective memory

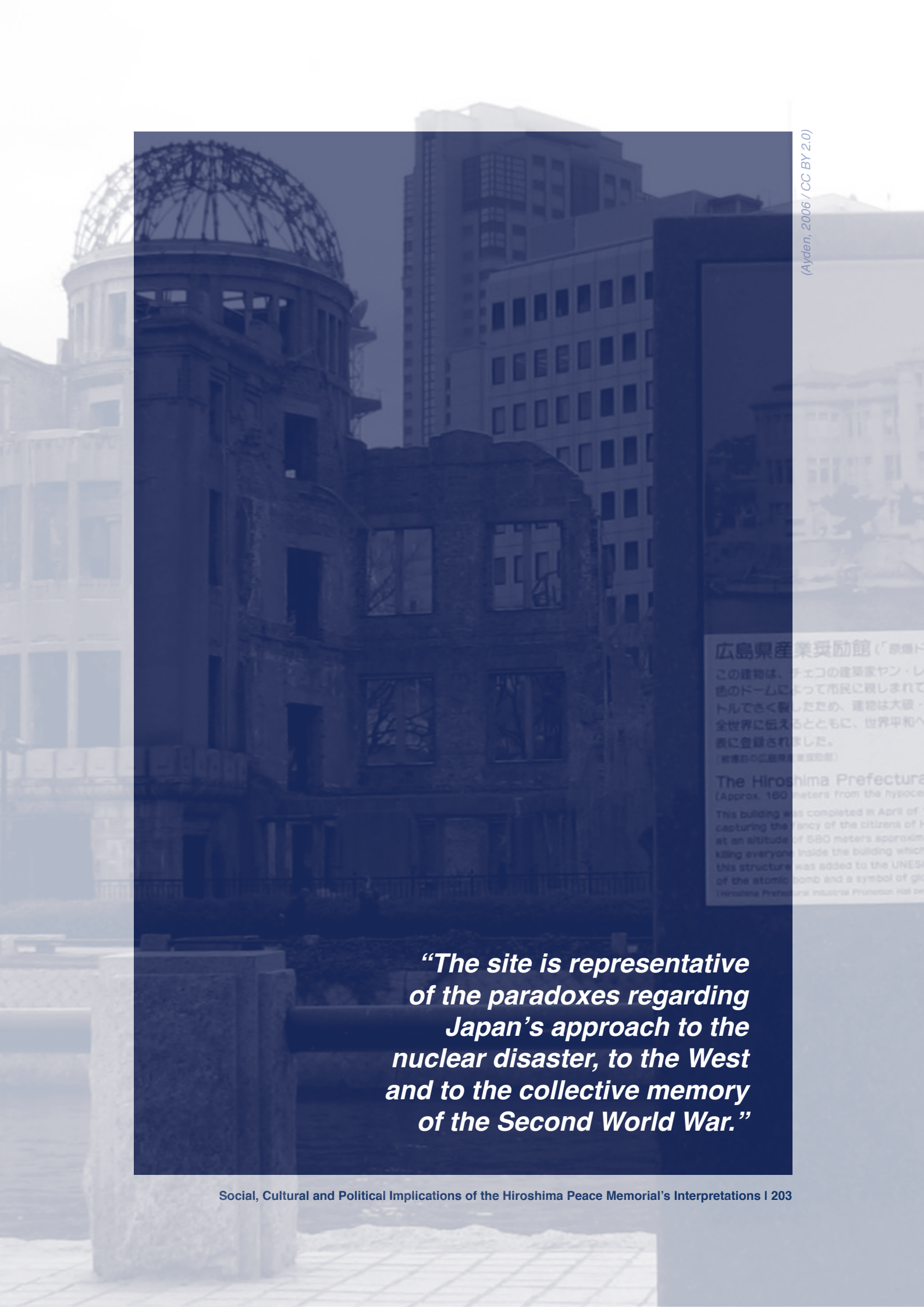
In a post-conflict reconstruction process, heritage can play a fundamental role in defining social identities and a sense of belonging (Sørensen & Viejo-Rose, 2015, p.2). Especially following the Second World War, heritage acquired a new meaning not only

as a celebration of human achievement, but also as a physical manifestation of the darker side of history, marked by cruelty and destruction (Logan & Reeves 2009, p. 1). Both kinds of heritage sites can be representative of what Pierre Nora calls *lieux de la mémoire* (Pierre, 1989), which means that sites are collectors of memories that connect a community to their past and generate a sense of belonging (Logan & Reeves 2009, p. 2). According to Nora's definition of heritage sites, there is an opposition between history and memory, in which history is a representation of the past, while memory is an attempt by the community (or communities) to connect the past to the present (Pierre 1989, p. 8). This distinction between history and memory is relevant for the matters of this paper, as one must understand how the same history can be remembered differently at a national and international level, causing contrasting views and sometimes even reviving the conflict. As will be discussed below, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) represents both a war related site and the place of a massacre, causing the generation of contrasting memories (Logan & Reeves 2009, p. 5). These kinds of heritage sites can be referred to as "places of pain and shame" (Logan & Reeves, 2009, p. 3).

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial (*Genbaku dome)*

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial, in Japanese called the Hiroshima Genbaku Dome (Dome of the Nuclear Bomb), was originally built between 1914 and 1915 by the Czech architect Jan Letzel (ICOMOS, 1996, p. 115; Utaka, 2009, p. 36). Located on the eastern side of the Motoyasu River, its original name was *the Hiroshima Commercial Exhibition Hall,* but was changed in 1933 to *Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall* (ICOMOS, 1996, p. 115; Schofield & Cocroft 2016, p. 35). With its 25-meter-high dome, it is a five-storey building, and it was built to enhance Hiroshima's industrial production in a period in which the city was becoming an important military base (Utaka, 2009, p. 36; ICOMOS, 1996, p. 115). On 6 August 1945, the Allied Powers dropped the atomic bomb *Little Boy* only few meters from this structure. Surprisingly, the building did not collapse, and it became the only standing structure in the area around the hypocentre of the explosion (Utaka, 2009, p. 36). From that day on, the *Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall* would become an important symbol for Japan and for all humanity. The post-war reconstruction started immediately after America's occupation of Japan. Already in 1949, a competition to build a memorial park for the victims of the nuclear bomb and the achievement of peace had been opened by the *Hiroshima Peace Memorial* Construction Law (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 35). The winner of this design competition was the architect Kenzo Tange, whose project aimed at reflecting the new democratic ideals and the achievement of global peace (Utaka, 2009). Tange presented his design project with the following justification:

> Peace is not naturally obtained easily for us from nature and gods. We need to fight and acquire our peace strongly and practically…to realize this understanding of peace, we are going to develop and construct this museum as a factory of peace. (Tange 1949 cited in Utaka, 2009, p.37)



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"The site is representative of the paradoxes regarding Japan's approach to the nuclear disaster, to the West and to the collective memory of the Second World War."

Figure 1. *Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Museum (Fontanella, 2015)*

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was built nearby the *Genbaku Dome,* between the Hon River and the Motoyasu River. Completed between 1950 and 1964, it is composed of a park and a museum that provide the interpretation of the Genbaku Dome itself (Fig.1) (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 35). The architectural style of the museum is inspired by Le Corbusier's design of the Palace of Soviets (Utaka, 2009, p.37). In 1995, the dome was proposed to the UNESCO Committee to be enlisted in the World Heritage List under the name Hiroshima Peace Memorial for World Heritage criterion VI (ICOMOS, 1996, p.117). Despite strong opposition from the US and Chinese Delegations, the inscription succeeded on the basis of the following justification:

> Firstly, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, *Genbaku Dome,* stands as a permanent witness to the terrible disaster that occurred when the atomic bomb was used as a weapon for the first time in the history of mankind.
>
> Secondly, the Dome itself is the only building in existence that can convey directly a physical image of the tragic situation immediately after the bombing.
>
> Thirdly, the Dome has become a universal monument for all mankind, symbolizing the hope for perpetual peace and the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons on earth (ICOMOS, 1996, p.115)

Conservation and interpretation of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial

A first understanding of the significance that the Hiroshima Peace Memorial has acquired over time can already be obtained by reviewing anecdotes related to the construction of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the conservation and interpretation measures that have been adopted since then. In addition, divergences that emerged after the nomination of the site in the World Heritage List will be explained to shed more light on the cultural significance and its transnational entanglements.

Political ambiguity

As discussed before, the sudden shift from nationalism to the support of democratic ideals represents a deep mark in the Japanese national identity (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p.181). This political confusion is also reflected in the history of the memorialisation and interpretation of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Schofield & Cocroft 2016, p.38). During the war, the architect Tange Kenzo, who designed the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, had been a strong supporter of nationalism and he contributed to the realisation of many celebratory monuments for the Japanese Empire. For this reason, his sudden conversion to democratic ideals raised some concerns, suggesting his opportunistic attitude based on the political situation (Utaka, 2009, p.37). This fact enforces Ōe's commentary on this particular stage of Japanese history, claiming that despite the apparent supportive response in reconstructing the nation in line with the directives from the US, Japan was still far from being democratic (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009. p.182).

Time for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial

When addressing the interpretation and symbolism of the nuclear disaster related to the Hiroshima *Genbaku Dome,* time is one of the most important concepts. In the narratives of the nuclear, there is a tendency to represent the tragedy of the 6th of August 1945 as a timeless event (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 133). The conservation of the dome itself aims to preserve the eternal condition of ruin for the building, keeping it exactly as it was after the explosion (ICOMOS, 1996, p. 115). The discussion on the preservation of the Genbaku Dome began in 1949; there was a general agreement on demolishing it, given that it is a reminder of a tragic event from which the people of Hiroshima were trying to recover (Utaka, 2009, pp. 37-38, 39). The Hiroshima City Government agreed only in 1966 to preserve the building as it is, influenced by the new perspective presented by the project of Tange, who suggested the promotion of the site as a symbol of global peace (Utaka, 2009, p. 38; ICOMOS, 1996, p. 115). Since then, the building has been fenced in and several interventions have been made to maintain its state of conservation (Fig. 2) (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 36; ICOMOS, 1996, p. 116). Another link to the importance of time for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial is visible in the recurrent representation of a

clock, which always reads the time at which the bomb hit: at 8:16 am. It can be seen in the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims (Fig. 3).

World Heritage inscription

Heritage is a strong tool for the manipulation of history, and it is often used by governments to help create an authorised national identity (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p.46). For this reason, many concerns about the shared meanings of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) were raised when its nomination to the World Heritage List was presented in 1995 (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 39). Already when analysing the name of the site, there is a clear paradox in the international and national interpretation of it, as the English name evokes the achievement of peace, while the Japanese name "Genbaku Dome" (Dome of the Nuclear Bomb) directly refers to the nuclear disaster (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p.35). To quote Renan (1882) in his discourse *What is a Nation?,* both the international and national interpretations of heritage have to be understood as a tool for the reconstruction of national identity (Renan, 1882, p. 10). Therefore, in the case of the Japanese interpretation, the nation is unified by the shared suffering caused by the nuclear disaster, whereas the international point of view aims to remember the costly and drastic achievement of peace. In light of its nomination to UNESCO's World Heritage List, both the United States and Chinese delegations raised their opposition to the recognition of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial as equally shared heritage for all humanity (UNESCO, 1996, p. 69). In the US's point of view, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial should not have been listed, being a war related site. As the World Heritage List was understood by the US delegation as representative of the best human achievements, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial could not be seen as a priority for the Convention (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 40). In addition, it could be argued that the recognition of this site as World Heritage would have highlighted the position of the US as the assailant of Japan at the end of the war, ignoring the reasons that brought the US to such a drastic solution (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 46). China supported the US delegation by arguing that there was historical inaccuracy in the nomination proposal, which presented Japan as a victim of the Second World War, with no mention of the war crimes that were committed by Japan in those years (Crawford, 2003., p. 110; UNESCO, 1996, p. 69, Annex V). Despite the many attempts from both delegations to contradict the nomination, the site was inscribed in 1996 under criterion VI, and the US's and China's concerns were recorded in the report as Annex V (Schofield & Cocroft, 2016, p. 40; UNESCO, 1996, Annex V).

Same history, different memories

The discussion related to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial's inscription in the World Heritage List has further highlighted the gap in understanding between Japan and the US related to the site. Although the final purpose of the site is to promote global peace and to remind all of humanity that such a tragedy should never be repeated (Utaka, 2009, p. 35), the

Figure 2. *Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) under restoration in 2015 (Fontanella, 2015)*

collective memory of the site has been constructed differently by both nations (Utaka, 2009, p. 43). This chapter aims to identify the elements of contrast that can be found in the narratives of both countries, with a special focus on Japanese literary and cinematographic production, which is considered a valid reflection of Japanese anxiety about the nuclear power and pollution caused by Western technology (Walker, 2016, p. 262).

Science and nature

In the Japanese scenario, the horror of the atomic bomb generated a sudden need to document and express the disaster through many means, such as art, literature, and cinema (Novielli & Scrolavezza, 2012, p. 149). As an incubator for these narratives, the new identity of Hiroshima has been continuously fed by these forms of interpretation (Utaka, 2009, p. 38). The literature genre that emerged in the post-war period is commonly known by the name Genbaku Bungaku, literally meaning “the literature of the nuclear bomb” (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 127). It comprises productions coming from both *hibakusha*, and writers who have not directly experienced the 6th and 8th of August 1945, but who have nevertheless felt the need to talk about it. *Hibakusha* is the term used to represent the people whose lives have been directly affected by the nuclear disaster (Novielli & Scrolavezza. 2012, p. 151). In these narratives, the bombing is always represented as a sudden interruption of everyday life (Novielli & Scrolavezza. 2012, p. 149), a silent white light bringing death and destruction (Bienati & Scrolavezza 2009, pp. 130-131). This representation of the moment of the explosion implies a personal involvement in the tragedy, in

contrast to the foreign interpretation that always depicts it as a mushroom-shaped cloud. A common thread connecting these various interpretations is the role of nature. The harmony of nature is a fundamental element in Japanese culture, and its role has become uncertain with Japan's introduction to Western technology (Novielli, 2010, p. 78). The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki therefore represent the culmination of these concerns, symbolising technology winning over nature, the West destroying the spirit of Japan (Novielli & Scrolavezza 2012, p. 150).

This abrupt break with nature is represented in many ways. An example that aims to express the lack of harmony in the post-nuclear nature of Hiroshima is the book *Kakitsubata (The Crazy Iris,* 1951), written by the author Ibuse Masuji (Bienati & Scrolavezza 2009, p. 135). From the same author is also the book K*uroi Ame (Black Rain*, 1965), a novel based on the tragedy of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and the "black rain" that followed the explosion, releasing radioactive waste that caused the death of many *hibakusha* in the years after the disaster (Novielli & Scrolavezza, 2012, pp. 150-151). Water is symbol of life and purity, and yet here it is seen as a false friend that brings death. Water's symbolism is recurrent in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

The end of the destruction

For all the above explained reasons, the events of 6 August 1945 are perceived by the hibakusha as the beginning of a new kind of destruction by an invisible enemy: radioactive contamination (Novielli & Scrolavezza, 2012, pp. 151-152). In her book *Ritual of Death or matsuri no ba*, the author Hayashi Kyoko ironically concludes by quoting the end of an American documentary on the Second World War, which says "and so the destruction ended" (1975). The quote remains unexplained, and yet full of significance, presenting the American point of view of this event, which is seen as the achievement of global peace and the end of destruction (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 134). The contrast generated by the US collective memory on the Hiroshima Peace Memorial can be understood by analysing how it is explained in authorised school history textbooks in the US. Textbooks are a valid tool for understanding the constructed memory of a nation, as they present an interpretation of history as it is wished the future generations will remember it (Crawford, 2003, p. 108). The drastic decision of the American president Harry Truman to drop the atomic bombs on Japan is usually justified as a desperate recource to prevent a costly invasion of Japan (Crawford, 2003, pp. 111-112). There are divergent opinions as to whether Japan had been given the opportunity to surrender or not, as Japanese textbooks would stress that the Japanese were ready to admit their defeat if they had had the chance (Crawford, 2003, p. 114). This discrepancy in the collective memory of both countries is the proof that George Orwell's words are true, "who controls the past, controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" (1949, p. 24).

Figure 3. *Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims (Fontanella, 2015)*

Japan and the nuclear

The discussions about the Hiroshima Peace Memorial represent the beginning of the discourse on nuclear power in Japan. The Genbaku Bungaku (literature about the nuclear bomb) set the basis for the later *Kaku Bungaku* (literature about nuclear energy), continuously changing the general perception of this terrible power (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 128). The following chapter provides an overview of the development of the discourse on nuclear energy from 1945 to 2011, the year of the Fukushima accident. Once again, the analysis is based on Japanese post-war cinema and literature, as main representatives of Japanese perceptions of the topic.

A foreign enemy

As already stressed above, the post-war political and social situation of Japan generated new and peculiar cultural productions in relation to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial's interpretation and conservation. These cultural productions are strictly associated with the new fear of nuclear power. They mostly represent apocalyptic scenarios caused by a misuse of science, reflecting the community's need to provide testimony about and to denounce the tragic event of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Novielli, 2010, p. 30). It must be acknowledged that in the years following the end of the war, several nuclear tests were carried out in the Pacific by the US, causing psychological distress and concerns among the Japanese. These tests led to an episode of radioactive fallout that caused the death of some Japanese fishermen around the Marshall Islands, where American scientists were working on a Bravo shot test of the hydrogen bomb (Tanaka, 2005, p. 2). This event became a source of inspiration for

the film producer Honda Ishirō, who, after visiting Hiroshima, decided to create a movie to denounce the catastrophes caused by the misuse of science and the horrors of war (Novielli, 2010, p. 78). His product was the famous movie *Godzilla*, known in Japanese as *Gojira* (1954). The result of radioactive fallout caused by American scientists, *Gojira* is a terrible combination of a gorilla and a whale (*kujira*), symbolising the paradox of nature transformed by technology (Tanaka, 2005, p. 3). The paradox is further intensified by the fact that in this movie, the enemy is not the monster, but the American scientists who created it (Novielli, 2010, p. 78). Godzilla is therefore a victim and an assailant, a "sad monster that mirrors human being" (Tanaka 2005, p. 8). *Gojira* is the first example of a new genre, called *kaijū eiga* (movies with strange beasts) (Novielli, 2010, p. 78). The movie was exported to the United States in 1956, and in 1998 the producer Roland Emmerich presented an American version of it, erasing all connection with radiation and nuclear tests. With time, *Gojira* transformed from a sad monster, a metaphor for the senseless nature of war, into a superhero of justice (Novielli, 2010, p. 78), a reflection of the American interpretation of the Second World War.

The enemy from within

In addition to the political consequences explained above, Emperor Hirohito's announcement to the nation also implied the end of *shintoism* as the officially-recognised state religion (Pruett 2010, p. 12). *Shintoism* is the religion on which the Japanese idea of harmony with nature is based, as it can be seen in the *Kojiki* (Record of ancient matters, 712), the first written narrative on the genesis of Japan (Villani, 2006). The claims that place the sun-goddess *Amaterasu* at the origins of the imperial dynasty also belong to this book (Walker, 2016, p. 27). In 1995, another terrible consequence of the Japanese defeat in the Second World War emerged, marking a new shift in Japanese identity in relation to nuclear power and to other countries. The fall of *shintoism* led to the creation of many diverse new religions, *shinsyukyō,* often based on the fear—or acknowledgement—of the end of society (Pruett, 2010, p. 12). Among these religions is the *Aum Shinrikyō,* a sect founded by Asahara Shōko. It already counted above 9,000 adepts in the country (Novielli, 2010, p. 13) when, in 1994, they made their first appearance with a terrorist attack in Matsumoto, killing seven people (Asukai & Maekawa, 2002, p. 149). It only became clear that they were behind this event on 20 March 1995, when five members of the sect attacked five important stations in Tokyo, causing the death of 12 people and intoxicating thousands more (Asukai & Maekawa, 2002, p. 150). A major cause of shock was the mode in which this terrorist attack was carried out, as the sect hit the most populated city of Japan, interrupting the daily routine by using sarin, a colourless and odourless chemical weapon (Novielli, 2010, p. 30). The connection to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is therefore obvious, with the only difference being that this time, the inappropriate and drastic use of science was coming from the inside (Novielli, 2010, p. 13). This event caused deep distress within the population, modifying their perception of nuclear energy and irremediably changing their position as victims of nuclear power.

This distress is reflected in Japanese cultural production with the creation of horror movies in which the fear of unexpected and silent death is represented as a curse that will chase whoever comes in contact with it. Representative of this genre are the movies *Ring* and *Ring 2,* produced by Nakata Hideo in 1998-1999, in which the malediction that causes unexpected and silent death is on a mysterious tape (Novielli, 2010, p. 30). The problem of fanaticism, which generated additional crises for the Japanese population's identity issue, is another of the matters addressed by Ōe during his career. An example of his engagement with the topic is the novel Chūgaeri (Somersault, 1999) (Bienati & Scrolavezza, 2009, p. 185).

A definitive shift from the position of victim to that of being responsible for the inappropriate use of science (with consequent radioactive fallout) is seen in the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Accident, which occurred on 11 March 2011 following a strong earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan's east coast (Walker, 2016, p.293). To paraphrase the words of the Japanese writer Murakami Haruki at a conference in Barcelona in June 2011, Japan has to finally face the reality that they have become directly responsible for a nuclear disaster themselves, and that the enemy should therefore not be considered a foreign power anymore (Bienati, 2013, pp. 31-32). Murakami continues, saying that the words engraved at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, "Rest in peace, Shall the mistake not be repeated", should now be re-written as a reminder (Bienati, 2013, p.32), this time directed at everyone, with no exclusions.

Conclusion

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) is the only standing building that directly recalls the first nuclear disaster in human history. During the reconstruction of the city of Hiroshima, the preservation of this building became the centre of attention, as maintaining it would have constantly reminded the local community of the atrocities of the war and the terrible consequences of the Japanese defeat. With the country on the path of both urban and ideological restoration, there were concerns about the message this memorial could send. With the contributions of architect Kenzo Tange, the building was preserved as an awareness-raising tool to prevent humanity from committing the same kinds of atrocities in the future. This interpretation soon proved to be strictly in line with the Japanese post-war ideology, which was characterised by a resigned approach to nuclear power. The humiliation of the defeat and the conditions under which they were forced to surrender caused a shift in position for the Japanese from assailant to victim of the war, as well as years of uncertainty and change at a political, social, and cultural level. Through an analysis of the Japanese approach to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and the cultural productions related to it, it has been possible to gain a better understanding of the factors that deeply influenced the Japanese people's perception of themselves. It also raised awareness about the discrepancies between Japan and other countries, pointing out unresolved issues with the US. In particular, the relationship between Japan

and the US has been the subject of many cultural productions, including *Godzilla* and Hayashi Kyoko's *matsuri no ba.* However, most of these interpretations contradicted the image that Japan wants to create for itself, as the Nobel Prize Ōe Kenzaburō pointed out in his discourse in 1995, in which he claimed these elements to be part of the *Japanese ambiguity.* Most of these ambiguities can be linked to the cultural, social, and political implications of the Hiroshima bombing of 6 August 1945, which have generated a colourful variety of interpretations expressed through Japanese cultural productions. It therefore cannot be denied that the Hiroshima Peace Memorial has played a fundamental role in the process of shaping Japanese identity, as it is representative of such a difficult stage of Japanese history. For these reasons, it is important to pursue an understanding of the Japanese perception of the site and of nuclear power in order to gain a better understanding of the issues that afflict contemporary Japan.

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Figures

Figure 1-3: Fontanella Pisa, Paola 2015

Figure p.203: By David McKelvey [CC BY 2.0] via Flickr < https://www.flickr.com/photos/dgmckelvey/34468743680 >

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(Pagani, 2017)

Tobias Pagani

DI QUI (NON) SI PASSA

Safeguarding and promoting Great War Heritage as remembrance of the conflicts XIXth century ideologies brought to Europe

Introduction

Di queste case	Of these houses
non è rimasto	nothing remains
che qualche	but the rubble
brandello di muro	of a ruined wall
Di tanti	Of the many
che mi corrispondevano	who were so close to me
non è rimasto	nothing remains
neppure tanto	not even that
Ma nel mio cuore	But in my heart
nessuna croce manca	not one cross is missing
È il mio cuore	This ravaged village
il paese più straziato	is my heart

This *free verse* poem by Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888-1970) was written in 1916 in the Friuli region (North-East Italy), where the author served as an infantry soldier in the trenches during the Great War. The village of San Martino del Carso was, in fact, razed to the ground in 1916 during the battles for the conquest of Mount St. Michele, a strategic landmark for both armies. This poem depicts very well not only the feelings the soldiers experienced on the field during the periods of battle, but also the ravaged state in which many places were left at the end of the war. In this case, the poet refers to a human settlement literally swept away by the force of the war; nothing was left but rubble and

Figure 1. *Next to Cima Palon, were the two extremities of the front known as the Denti del Pasubio or Pasubioplatten. (Pagani, 2017)*

corpses. Many other sites were heavily modified throughout the four long years of battle, but amongst those were also sites not previously settled, mostly mountains on the southern front and fields on the eastern one. It was at these sites that the harshest conflicts took place, leaving behind a landscape bearing the marks of this moment in history that which can be observed even a century later[1]. In this sense, it was the last war of its kind, opening a new era of modern warfare. As Ferguson states in *The War of the World: History Age of Hatred* "The first world war changed everything" (Ferguson, N. 2006)

The changes brought about by this war can still be seen today. Despite the potential lessons taught to us by these happenings, current political situations can make one think we didn't learn much from the experience in the end. How can raising awareness about the memory of past conflicts, taking Denti del Pasubio (a militarised landscape on Mount Pasubio, near Vicenza, Italy) as an example, be used to promote a sense of solidarity among contemporary citizens? This question inspired this paper, which will analyse the changes brought about by historic events in particular. It will support the idea that heritage sites such as the Denti del Pasubio, which influenced not only the landscape but also the attitude of Europe towards war, can find a new use in moments of uncertainty. The main idea is that the safeguarding and promotion of this kind of heritage at a European level can help foster peace, rather than simply promote remembrance of the nationalist movements of the

1 Cities were mostly left untouched, since warfare was, as for in the XIX century, still a business to be dealt with by soldiers, literally on battlefields.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, the paper will first discuss the ideologies of nationalism following Hobsbawm's theories of invented traditions, a social feature of most European powers since the French Revolution that re-shaped the world. Then the case study of Denti del Pasubio will be introduced as one of many heritage sites of the First World War that could be used to sustain the ideal of European peace. This section will include an historical introduction to the case study, a description of the site and of the ideologies linked to it, as well as an overview of the measures undertaken for its safeguarding. The chapter "Why safeguarding" deals then with the ideologies of European peace sustained by projects such as the European Cultural Heritage Label (as one example among the many others carried out in the public and private sectors). Finally the conclusion will attempt to link the ideas of the paper to the current political situation in order to highlight the importance of war heritage sites.

On the Western Front between France and the German Empire, the frontlines were created using fortresses and hundreds of kilometres of trenches. Meanwhile, on the Italian 'Southern' front, the geomorphic features of the territory were used for the fortification of the frontline between the two conflicting powers: the Kingdom of Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. For most of the war, the border between these two powers almost entirely crossed a large section of the alps from one mountain peak to another. It extended from the Swiss border to Italy near Mt. Ortler to the Adriatic Sea, more or less around the Soča/Isonzo river, which the trenches surrounded until autumn 1917. The border and the regions of Trentino and South Tirol were the main reasons for Italy to change sides after the beginning of the war. These territories were annexed to the Austrian Empire after the Third Italian War of Independence in 1866 and were later reclaimed by the Italian kingdom. Italian Irredentism was the patriotic movement that developed at the end of the century that "sought to deliver Italian lands from foreign rule […]; their object was to emancipate the lands of Trentino and South Tirol, Gorizia, Istria, Trieste, Ticino, Nice, Corsica, and Malta from Austrian, Swiss, French, and British rule" (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

Ideologies

Eric Hobsbawm and the invention of tradition

In *The* Invention of Traditions, Hobsbawm analyses the phenomenon of the creation of identities through traditions. He defines an invented tradition as a "set of practices […] which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 1). He uses examples such as the folklore of the Scottish Highlands,and suggests that such traditions are pieces of evidence that have to be taken into consideration when analysing a society and a culture. The half century preceding the First World War was the period when the "invention of traditions" arose. Many states had been recently unified or existed for only

short periods of time, and processes of unification were still ongoing that lead to the creation of standard national languages, and identification with symbols such as flags, national heroes, hymns, and so on. It was a period in which phrases like “We have made Italy: now we must make Italians” could be heard, with this line in particular being voiced by Massimo d’Azeglio, one of the fiercest Italian unionists, in 1861.

In the case of Europe, religion also played a fundamental role in the creation of traditions; it was a trait of most European nation states, which shared many religious festivities, for example. Furthermore, the social traditions of the time were often developed around royal families (most of Europe). It was also the time in which the masses started their mobilisations and state traditions were created, such as the First of May, which remains a ritual for the working class. Furthermore, the re-creation of sport traditions occurred: it is not a coincidence that the modern Olympic Games recalling the ancient Greek traditions were held in 1896 as a field of comparison between nations. All these features were present in the life of most of Europe’s inhabitants, with models of traditions being created that pitted nations and peoples against each other. The whole process proved very successful, as we now know that nationalisms, and the traditions related to them, became the driving force that shook the world not only before and during the Great War, but throughout the twentieth century with the onset of the Second World War and the Cold War.

Remembrance

The First World War has remained a vivid memory in the minds of the people, both for the soldiers who fought in it and the families who were touched by it. Jay Winter states that “the war was remembered initially and overwhelmingly as an event in Family History” (Winter, 1999, p. 42). It was a shock to the lives of millions of families who had either lost their husbands, sons, or brothers to the war, or had seen them come back wounded, with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Shell Shock), unable to take part in family life. Traces of this remain alive in family history up until now, but with the flow of time, the acts of remembrance, personal or collective, are becoming scarce. In the case of Mt. Pasubio, broader actions have been taken by the authorities throughout the years, more as a form of “healing through remembrance” than of what Winter defines as “memory business” (1999, p. 3). The war has become part of local history, and has left huge traces. The province of Vicenza, where Mt. Pasubio and much of the war landscape is administratively situated, bears marks that have become a sort of collective memory. The emblem of the province is an ensemble of the flag of the city and the four war memorials, all of them in the Pre-Alps: the Ossuaries in Mt. Cimone, Asiago, Mt. Grappa, and Mt. Pasubio. The entire mountainous region is crowded with memorials and cemeteries, the latter normally divided (and funded) by country. In the cities, entire districts dedicate their streets to the battalions, brigades, and sections of the army that fought the war. Nearly all villages and cities of the region, and many nationwide, remember the fallen on a yearly

Figure 2. *The peaks fortified through excavations, with deep trenches at their top (Pagani, 2017).*

basis with commemorations. Some memorial recreations of the war are also part of this act of remembrance (e.g. Mt. Novegno), but these are often linked with the new waves of nationalism that are becoming a reality again.

These are examples of what Jay Winter would define as collective memories: they originate from the will of the people to share their war trauma, and to remember; it is their willingness to make these memories manifest themselves that makes them important. They become a way to overcome the traumatic experience through common memorialization, since “no man goes to war alone” (Winter, 1999, p. 60).

The case study

The decades before the start of the First World War were filled with development due to the industrial revolution combined with the imperial expansion of the Western powers, which managed to set up their respective empires by the beginning of the war. The arms race between the nations, the ever more technologically advanced warfare techniques, and the introduction of tanks, airplanes, and weapons, turned a war that was supposed to only last a few months into one of the largest conflicts that humans ever engaged in, one that would lead to over 37 million casualties (Encyclopaedia Britannica). The international atmosphere was increasingly tense, with an escalating number of crises and small conflicts. The European powers were still very young. Following the example of France and the creation of the United Kingdom, Germany had been unified into the Second Reich

during the second half of the nineteenth century, Italy in 1861, and Austria-Hungary in 1867. Some of these nations had colossal empires, such as the British and the French, with overseas colonies and protectorates. Many others also had overseas territories, which brought the conflict to a larger scale: a World War.

The militarism in which the states had fallen had spread throughout the peoples and had become palpable: some political parties were urging for war, and nationalism reigned over Europe. Patriotism, loyalty to one's nation (and God), and devotion to it were unifying the newly 'created' peoples, while the almost automatic comparison and contrast with other nations was increasing the distance between 'us' and 'them' (Assman, Hölscher. 1988, p. 13).

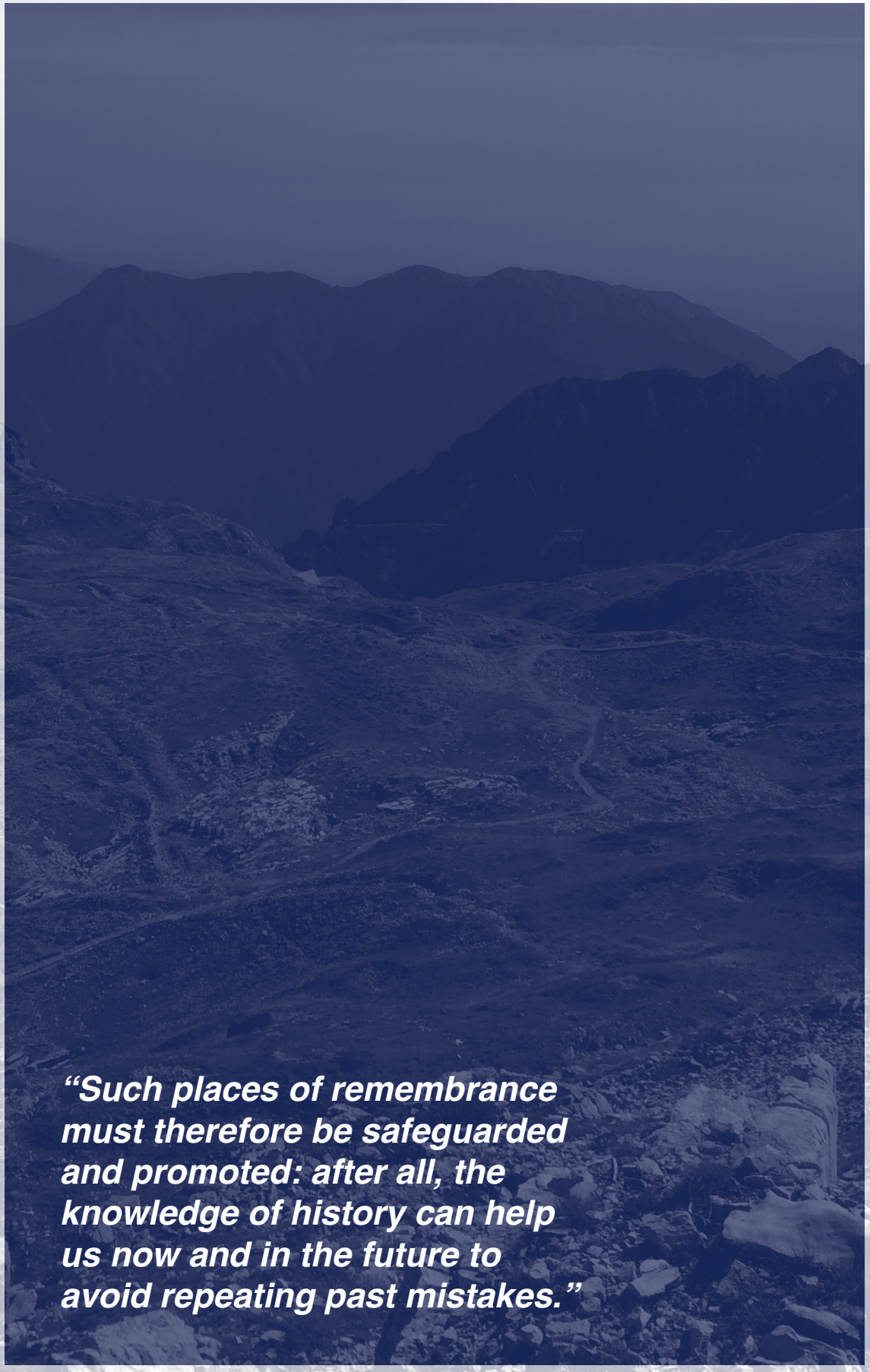
Nearly one year after the outbreak of war in the 'powder keg of Europe', the Kingdom of Italy still had not taken its position. On the night of 23 May 1915, the Italian Army was ordered to attack the Habsburg forces and to take back the territories of Trentino and South Tirol for Italy. The border between the two powers remained more or less the same for the entire duration of the conflict, with the exception of the Friulian front, which was pushed back in 1917 during the Battle of Caporetto[2].

The site

One of the most important areas along the front, cast between the Asiago Plateau and the Adige Valley and Lake Garda, is Mount Pasubio. The mountain range where most of the fighting took place includes the Adamello-Brenta massif to the west, the *Asiago plateau* with *Monte Ortigara* and the Dolomitic *Pale di S. Martino* on its back, *Monte Civetta* and the *Marmolada,* as well as *Monte Grappa*. Some of these names that are known today for being inscribed to the UNESCO World Heritage List were then fortresses of the Alps. And they were fortresses in the literal sense of the word, since some of these mountains were either used as natural defences to build fortifications or were hollowed out to turn them into unassailable bunkers.

The mountain range is shared today by the Province of Vicenza and the Autonomous Province of Trento, and it marks the provincial border between the regions of Veneto and Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tirol. Next to Cima Palon, two peaks of the massif, separated by a saddle, were the two extremities of the front known as the *Denti del Pasubio* or *Pasubioplatten* (Fig.1). The two peaks, known in Italian as *Dente Austriaco* and *Dente Italiano* and in German as *Österreichische Platte* and *Italienische Platte*, look "like two prows of a dreadnought"[3] (Cipriani, Magrin. 2009, p. 59) facing each other. Both peaks had been fortified through excavations, with deep trenches at their top (Fig. 2) and bottom, and a series of tunnels that had been hollowed out making the two crests

2 Then, a coalition of Austro-Hungarian and German forces managed to push back the Italian defences to the Piave River.
3 Own translation



The two Denti (Pagani, 2017)

"Such places of remembrance must therefore be safeguarded and promoted: after all, the knowledge of history can help us now and in the future to avoid repeating past mistakes."

Figure 3. *Two Denti, Mount Pasubio (Pagani, 2017)*

huge fortresses. These spurs formed the front, the bridgehead that both armies were not allowed to step back from, because that would have meant the enemy could easily reach the backlines making them vulnerable. On the other hand, the goal of both sides was to take control of the Pasubio, so as to be able to claim the contested lands.

Short history

After, the front known as 'Italian Front', or 'Southern Front', ran along the alps down to the border to the east. This border line was more or less maintained until the Battle of Caporetto (1917), when a coalition of Austrian/German Imperial forces managed to breach the Italian lines to cross Tagliamento River and set up a new frontline along the Piave River. Althought it was strong national defeat, intimidating the entire Kingdom, the episode also managed to bring more unity behind the lines and to the whole of Italy, fostering resistance nationwide. The front line did not develop any further until the armistice in November 1918.

Meanwhile, the Pasubio played – at least for the first two years of war and until Caporetto – a fundamental role. Abandoned by the Austrians, the summit remained under Italian control until 1916. In this first year and throughout the winter of 1915/16, both armies kept positions and worked on strategic fortifications while fighting the first real battle: that of survival against the harshness of winter in the high mountains (Cipriani, 2009, p. 33). The warfare started in the spring of 1916, when the Austrian Kaiserjäger attacked the front in a battle today known

as the *Strafexpedition*[4], (German for *punitive expedition*, intended to punish Italy for betraying the alliance), the *Spring Offensive*, T*rentino Offensive or Zum Po/Po Offensive*. The Imperial army took control of the peak, which then became Dente Austriaco, and the front line on the Pasubio was set, where it then remained until the very end of the war. Because of the importance of the Pasubio in preventing enemy troops from entering the plain, the *Porte del Pasubio* (Pasubio's Doors), the saddle between Cima Palon, was blocked, and the motto of the Royal forces became "Di qui non si passa!"[5]. The entire year of 1916 was the most brutal: both armies launched themselves in attacks on the enemy's fronts, unsuccessfully trying to climb the two *Denti* in desperate attempts to take control of the mountain (Fig. 3). The final attacks from the Italian side came in autumn of 1916, but the *Dente Austriaco* was unconquerable:

> The *Dente* is on average 70m high completely dominating the underlying area. Where the rocks are less elevated and more accessible, the *Selletta dei Denti*, the way through is inevitable, thus being under the crossfire of the many machine guns in the hollows (Cipriani, Magrin. 2009, p. 71)

The winter of 1916/17 is remembered as one of the harshest of the last century, as it reached records of rain and snowfall throughout the continent. On the Pasubio the snowfall reached 7-8 metres (Cipriani, 2009). From then onwards, and during the year 1917, the war on the Pasubio turned into *mine warfare*, with only few frontal attacks. The Austrian troops started to dig the *Ellison Gallery,* a tunnel crossing the *Dente Austriaco* to reach underneath the *Dente Italiano*, with the goal of blowing it up. On the Italian side, similar galleries were built, aimed at interrupting Austro-Hungarian attempts to blow up the stronghold. This lead to the creation of the *Strada delle 52* (Road of the 52 Tunnels), a masterpiece of military engineering, climbing up more than 700 metres in height along 6555 metres on the precipitous slopes of the South Face of Mt. Pasubio. With its 2280 metres of hollowed tunnels, this mule track was realised between February and November of 1917, and – protected from Imperial fire – it served to refurnish the Italian troops on the front.

The final chapter of the story of the *Denti del Pasubio* starts at 4.30 am on the 13th March 1918. It began the moment that a mine of 50,000 kg of mixed explosives detonated under the Dente Italiano.

> […] to the gloomy thunder of the explosion which made the front crumble in apocalyptic ruin, followed the slam of the shattered rocks and their falling back down and rolling on the ground. Together came frightening bursts of flames and gases, for which the Dente appeared submerged in a sea of flames with terrifying tongues of fire leaping like ranting snakes[6] (Pieropan, Baldi. 1989)

4 aka Battle of Asiago, because the Austrians took control of the city and the plateau of Asiago.
5 You don't come through here. Own translation
6 Own translation.

No infantry attack followed; the front line remained unaltered. Despite the last attacks, the lines kept up while other more important battles were being fought on the Piave-Grappa front section. The *heart wrenching* war was coming to an end: the mine warfare had not brought much loss of life, and after its end, guns and artillery remained silent. The enthusiasm for fighting had long vanished; the men were exhausted waiting for matters to be solved on the Piave, around which the last battles were fought before the Armistice of Villa Giusti in Padova on 3rd November 1918. This was a day in which, for the first time, the Italian tricolour flag flew over the Buonconsiglio Castle in Trento.

Nationalism and its propaganda were the wood fuelling the fire of the Great War. Many people were anticipating a war's beginning, impatient to draw their swords. This nationalism helped to unify countries whose subcultures were still struggling to come together, especially in a nation such as Austria-Hungary, where the cultures were at least as many as the eleven[7] languages spoken on the national territory. Despite the horrors of the First World War, there were flashes of humanity. Take, for example, when the numbers of prisoners of war increased, and the men realised that, behind uniforms with different flags were the same humans as they were, and not simply the monsters depicted in propaganda. Or when, during the *Christmas Truce* of 1914, soldiers of opposing forces unofficially crossed No Man's Land to exchange greetings, food, and souvenirs, hand back war prisoners, and share the feasting moment with others. At the end, on both sides of the trenches, there were widespread Christian values that were a fundamental part of the social structures of that time. Values of *Dio, Patria, Famiglia* (God, Homeland, Family) attributed to Ferdinando Urli (Cipriani, Magrin, 2009, p. 8) were shared by most as much as those of camaraderie, sacrifice, and loyalty. The summation of these was the sacrifice of dying for one's ideals.

Events like the *Christmas Truce* were not appreciated by the commanding forces, as such heart-softening situations were not supposed to reach the soldiers or the people working on the home front. For this reason, commanders censored letters from soldiers to their families that could have spread the awareness of the carnage at the fronts. Men reached levels of alienation that allowed them to shoot masses of people and fight brutally with bayonets.

State of conservation

According to Nataloni, even during the war people were incentivised to recuperate as many military manufactures as possible in order to re-use them. By the end of the war in 1918, materials, bombs, munitions, as well as soldiers and even corpses paved the way to the valley. After the most dangerous objects were removed, one year after the armistice

7 German, Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, Romanian, Croatian, Slovenian, Slovak, Serbian, Hungarian, Italian. (Kolb, C. 2017).

Figure 4. *DI QUI NON SI PASSA, reads the sign at the Porte del Pasubio (Pagani, 2017)*

at the end of 1919, the dangerous search of remains on the battlefield became one of the most popular activities for people returning to their lands. Nataloni defines three timeframes for the collection of finds: the first was after WWI, to amass reusable materials. The second was after WWII, the period when the dismantlement of fortresses, armoured buildings, and military villages was undertaken (it became, again, an occupation for some families living in the areas, who risked their lives handling unexploded materials).

The third era of activity began around the 1970s. This time, the purpose was not to sell the finds, but rather to collect them as an act of remembrance. In this period (still ongoing) the sons, daughters, or grandchildren of people who witnessed or died in the Great War started looking for objects that could enrich the tales they heard. This lead to the first private and public collections that can nowadays be found in many of the villages and in some of the fortresses around the former front.

Following the decades of private sector archaeology in the mountains and the apporaching centenary of the start of the Great War, in 2001 the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and The Ministry of Tourism took their first safeguarding actions: law 78 regarding the "*Tutelage of historic heritage of the First World War*" was passed. Even

if the initial idea was to finance the safeguarding and recovery of the remains for the Province of Vicenza, it became a greater action for the safeguarding of the historic heritage related to the Great War. This law followed periods in which all European countries had taken care of building monuments and cemeteries to commemorate the 'heroes of the motherland'. Law 78 went beyond that, however, since it was intended to safeguard heritage as a witness of the historic events that had shaken Europe, hence for the historic cultural values linked to the objects. The funds for the safeguarding projects are given through the *Special technical and scientific committee for the historic heritage of the First World War*, which was created in response to law 78. One of the main projects financed was the *Open-Air Museum of the Great War of Vicenza's Pre-Alps*. This included the conservation of the characteristic objects from the war, the safeguarding of the territory where interventions took place, as well as the organisation of management for the new system (2015). Furthermore, it included the interventions on the Pasubio, where the *Road of the 52 Tunnels* was fixed, together with the many tunnels on the two *Denti*, and the memorial monuments by *Porte del Pasubio*. Trenches, as well as many posts on both peaks, were restored, and interventions were made for them to resist inclement weather.

Why safeguarding?

The projects of safeguarding the Great War's heritage, such as that found at the *Denti del Pasubio,* does not merely address Italy, where now most of such heritage is. This safeguarding is an effort undertaken by, and for, the whole of Europe.

European ideals

After two world conflicts, which both started in the Old Continent, brought immense pain to the entire world, and after the failure of the League of Nations and of the peace agreements following the First World War, theorists who had believed in the unification of the continent started to gain a following. Among them was Immanuel Kant, who in his essay *Perpetual Peace* had maintained how a federation could have brought peace to Europe (Brown, 2014). The grounds of what has nowadays become the European Union were those of building economic interdependency so as to avoid future conflicts like the two that just occurred. The economic agreements then spread to other fields, reaching health, environment, justice, security, and other policies. Nowadays, the EU's achievements, including respect of human rights, environmental protection, common growth and economic stability, and, among many others, the freedom of movement and the abolition of borders8. There are many opinions against this, such that as Chris Bickerton, who claims that the EU has not at all brought peace (2015). It is a fact, however, that in the EU peace has now remained for seventy years, and actions and development of the EU have certainly fostered this period of peace, despite the tensions that may occur between member states.

If regions such as Trentino-South Tirol and Tirol have become so intertwined, this also has to do with the developments of the EU and of its treaties. Projects such as the Euroregions, (e.g. *Euregio Tirol-Südtirol-Trentino*), systems of cooperation between two or more regions of different European countries, were promoted by the Council of Europe to create collective spaces (MOT, 2017) where development is communal and not slowed down by the presence of a border. This is remarkable, in a zone where, until the 70s, minorities (or majorities) had exponents who would take up arms against the (Italian) system.

Using this heritage

In the last fifty years, the commemoration of the war has been supported by regional, national and international authorities. The EU has also achieved much in terms of the safeguarding of the heritage of the war, mostly through the Council of Europe. Projects such as the Euroregions draw people nearer to one another, in the case of Südtirol, by working towards a sort of comprehensive administrative system highlighting the importance of interconnection in that area. Tools such as the Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage and the many funds made available to the member countries for the promotion of heritage have brought many achievements in the field of remembrance. One of the most relevant projects promoted by the EU through the European Commission was the *European Heritage Label* (EHL). The initiative was initially pushed by single member states of the Union and was then brought to fruition in 2011. This label, somehow similar to the UNESCO World Heritage one, focuses on sites with values related to Europe and the European Union, and to the path that brought to the foundation of the latter. The label and the organisations supporting it, mostly national heritage bodies, monitor the safeguarding and the promotion of the listed sites to make educational use out of them. Among the sites that have been awarded the label of European Heritage (European Commission, 2017d) are the World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Łużna-Putski, Poland, which:

> is the final resting place for soldiers from [the] three armed forces, coming from territories that are part of today's Austria, Hungary, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Slovenia,.. and from different religious and linguistic backgrounds (European Commission, 2017c).

The importance of these heritage sites and of their use in awareness-raising about the dark chapters of European history have seen growing attention in the last decade, especially with the centennial of the conflict nearing. In this framework, more such sites have been proposed for EHL, such as Fort Cadine in Trento (Fondazione Museo Storico del Trentino, 2017); or even for the World Heritage List*: Cemeteries and Memorials of the First World War* is a joint nomination by Flanders, Wallonia, and France. The EHL is only one of the many examples of safeguarding that have been undertaken in the past few years on war sites. Throughout Europe, considerable amounts of funds have been allocated to World War Heritage in the past few years, many of them coming from EU

bodies through several programmes. In this heritage *niche*, previously managed mostly by the private sector, first big steps are being taken. Nevertheless, smaller activities and support from local organisations remain essential; on this path, initiatives such as the European Cultural Heritage Year or the Cultural Heritage Weeks, the other two pillars of the EU's action plan for cultural heritage, are fundamental to patronise and highlight heritage initiatives of diverse scale. In the former case are initiatives such as *shared Heritage*, a platform for heritage-related events to be organised throughout the European Heritage Year 2018, where organisations and institutions have the opportunity to advertise their heritage-related activities. In the latter case, it is a yearly programme with similar goals but a time schedule restricted to the month of September (European Heritage Days, 2017).

In a safeguarding framework like this, the legacy of a site like the *Denti del Pasubio* becomes important for the common use of the peoples of Italy, Austria, and Hungary. Such heritage should continue to be conserved and promoted as a symbol of the steps that had to be taken to reach the abolition of borders. Crossing borders has been difficult, and in some cases even impossible, for a long time; now the interrelation of the peoples of Europe has achieved much. The crossing of frontiers itself has become so taken for granted that recent political developments should make one ask themselves, "have we learned anything from the past?". If the bloodbaths of the Great War, the cruelties of the Second World War, the separation of the Cold War have taught us anything, it is that together, the people of Europe can be stronger and live in peace with one another. Let this break the "attempt to establish continuity with an historic past" (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 1) of conflict, 'creating a tradition' of peace rather than one of hostility. If nations must exist, then let them be transcendent of race, language, religion, borders; make them "a great aggregation of men, in sane mind and warm heart, with a moral conscience that calls itself a nation" (Renan, 1882).

Conclusion

The 'Migrant Crisis' that started in 2015 managed to cast doubt about the ideals of unity that this paper has dealt with so far. The border controls for the containment of migrants have shown the worst EU peoples and governments can reach and highlighted that the way to true integration is still far off. It is now 2017; exactly one hundred years ago, the war was still being fought along our borders. Reading about Austria sending troops and tanks to the Brenner pass, imagining that the border line is ready to be wired, should make one think about contemporary implications. These are actions that, after all, not only evidence the self-centredness of some, but also annihilate all the efforts taken by one's own fathers. What happened a century ago were "episodes of highest valour of Alpini and Bersaglieri on the one side, Kaiserjäger and Landesschützen on the other" (Cipriani, Magrin. 2009, p. 103); a possibly-avoidable conflict during which people died to allow us to have the environment we live in. Objects like this case study have

an immense potential, if used as educational tools about more than the mere historic values, which might lead to similar nationalisms like the ones they were built for. The lesson to be learnt from ideologies of separation can be supported by these elements of the past, standing as reminders of darker times. Such places of remembrance must therefore be safeguarded and promoted: after all, the knowledge of history can help us now and in the future to avoid repeating past mistakes. “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” wrote G. Santayana at the beginning of the XXth century; this lesson still must be learned. Knowledge brings, after all, understanding: War Heritage Sites shall be used, visited, to realise what cruelty man is capable of. Fortresses, trenches, buildings are still there, taking the visitors back to a period when ideologies controlled the minds of men. It is a duty of the EU to foster peace, towards a future when *ravaged hearts* (Ungaretti, 1916) will not be the results of man’s cruelty.

> [The mountains around the Vallarsa], a poetry of landscapes and natural beauties that nature offers us generously. A poetry made also by the works and the days of thousands of men who dwelled here, hoped, who feared, screamed, killed and cried here for things they often didn’t even understand, but of which we today, also often so unconsciously, enjoy and benefit: peace and freedom (Cipriani, Magrin, p. 104)

DI QUI NON SI PASSA, reads the sign at the *Porte del Pasubio* (Fig. 4), before the Sacred Zone with the soldier’s graves. Then, “one didn’t come through”, the one step across the border used to cost one’s own life risk. The same step today, there at the Brenner pass is made in total freedom. Today, *di qui si passa*.

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Figures

All figures: Pagani, 2017.

Contributors

With a background in architectural engineering, ***Sara Akhlaq*** *considers built structures nothing short of a marvel. She considers herself a lifelong student in the field of architecture and built heritage. The built structures that she finds most intriguing are those in a state of dilapidation, as well as the structures that hold a historical value and are deeply associated with the cultural heritage of a particular nation or region. With a masters in Heritage Conservation and Site Management, she aims to learn the ideologies associated with the field and to offer her experience to cultural heritage.*

Juan Carlos Barrientos *was born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1987. Following in the footprints of his father, a renowned lawyer in his home country, he went on to study law at the Central American Technological University (UNITEC), specialising in Diplomacy and International Business Law. He's an active member of the International Cultural Youth Exchange program (ICYE) as a volunteer coordinator in Honduras since 2007; he has also taken part in activities of the organisation in Austria and Germany. He is further involved with the Liberal Party of Honduras as a founding member of the *Renacer Liberal* youth organisation. Juan Carlos is currently enrolled as a master student of World Heritage Studies at the Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany since 2017.*

Jonathan Bill Doe *from Ghana in West Africa. He pursued a bachelor's in philosophy with history. Upon graduating, he worked with the Historical Society of Ghana, after which he proceeded to be a freelance tour guide, interpreting Ghanaian heritage to both local and international audiences. He later joined a US National Science Foundation-sponsored research project, Diaspora for Development, where he briefly served as a Willamette University Junior Scholar. Jonathan is presently pursuing an M.A. in World Heritage at the BTU. He is interested in questions of heritage conservation and environmental sustainability. Some of his reflections on current affairs and radio documentaries were featured by a Ghanaian state broadcaster.*

Arman Ebrahimi *was born in Iran. He has bachelor's degree in conservation and restoration of historical buildings, and he is presently pursuing an M.A. in World Heritage Studies at the BTU. He has done two internships during his bachelor in two renowned world heritage sites in Iran: Persepolis and Bisotun. He is interested in the role of heritage sites in societies and the motivations and ideologies in the conservation, negligence, or even destruction of heritage sites.*

Marina Freckmann *has a bachelor's degree in American studies and architecture from the University of Virginia and is currently a master's student in World Heritage Studies at the Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus-Senftenberg. Her master's study focuses on the role of tangible heritage as a tool for legitimising national identity formation and the role of politics in cultural conflict zones. Marina's academic pursuits are complemented by a professional track in Marketing and Development for Arts and Educational institutions. She is half American, half British, lived in South America and Asia for several years during her childhood, and has resided in Berlin, Germany since June 2014.*

Paola Fontanella Pisa *comes from Brescia, in the north of Italy. She is an M.A. Candidate in World Heritage Studies at the BTU Cottbus-Seftenberg, and she has a bachelor in East Asian Studies obtained at Ca'Foscari University in Venice, Italy. She is specialising in the field of disaster risk management, researching the role of heritage sites that have originated from natural and man-made disasters in Japan.*

Mare Heimrāte *born in Riga, Latvia, studied social and cultural anthropology at J.W. Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main. She has conducted field works related to the Latvian Diaspora in Australia and Argentina and is currently a master's student in World Heritage Studies at Brandenburg Technical University Cottbus-Senftenberg. She finds interest in the topic of 'heritage conservation and ideologies' in examining various actors and their perspectives.*

Laura Hernandez *was born in Colombia and works as a Scientific Assistant of the Department of Architectural Conservation and the DFG-Graduiertenkolleg at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg. She has a bachelor's degree in architecture from La Salle University in Bogota, Colombia and a master's in World Heritage Studies from BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg. Her professional experience is both in the field of cultural heritage conservation and architecture design. Her research interests include built heritage conservation and contemporary architecture interventions in sites of cultural significance. She has been scholarship holder from the National Foundation for the future of Colombia COLFUTURO, the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD in Germany, and the Framework of the Women's Advancement Initiative at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg.*

Elisabeth Korinth *is currently studying in the international master's programme World Heritage Studies. With an academic background in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, she previously worked as an assistant at the Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Marburg, focusing on the issue of cultural heritage protection in conflicts. Since 2017, she has worked for the Berlin Museum of the Ancient Near East and the Heidelberg Academy of Science. Elisabeth chose to be part of the Study Project Conservation and Ideologies to further research the various reasons that can lead to the destruction or conservation of heritage in the Middle East.*

Eva Maas, *from Germany, achieved her bachelor's degree at the University of Leipzig in the field of media and communications studies and romance studies with a focus on Spanish. Her focus in the main studies lay on Film Science, while her bachelor's paper dealt with the screenplay art of Wes Anderson. In the Master program of World Heritage Studies at Brandenburgische Technische Universität Cottbus, her interests lie in art and architectural history, as well as UNESCO's Memory of the World Program.*

Coming from Denmark, ***Katrine Majlund Jensen*** *has a background in the fields of aesthetic theory and heritage. Her background has been put into practice in different cultural institutions contesting history through exhibition practices, lately at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. Thus, her research is often a result of interdisciplinary*

approaches with a special interest in how experimentation and artistic practice can challenge conform thinking about heritage conservation and ideologies.

Isabelle Mühlstädt, *from Kassel, Germany studied art history and classical archaeology at the Freie Universität Berlin from 2012-2016. She specialised in architectural history but dealt with political issues related to archaeology and conservation. She is interested in the political forces that have influenced decision-making processes in the past years in order to pull out some useful lessons for comparable sites dealing with the preservation of cultural properties in post-conflict situations.*

Tobias Pagani *is a M.A. World Heritage Studies student at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany. During the master's programme, he developed an interest in war heritage and militarised landscapes, particularly inspired by the sites near the town he grew up in: Vicenza, Italy. Before moving to Germany for his studies, Tobias earned his Bachelor of Arts in Language, Culture and Society of Japan at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy. Besides his studies, he works as a collaborator at Salon Suisse, collateral event to the Venice Biennale, and is a passionate rower.*

Clara Rellensmann *works at the Department of Architectural Conservation at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU). She holds an M.A. in "World Heritage Studies" from the BTU and a B.A. in "European Studies" from the University of Passau. Prior to joining academia, Clara worked for cultural institutions in Costa Rica, Bahrain, Germany, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. From 2011 to 2016, she worked for the UNESCO Offices in Bangkok and Yangon. Over the years, she has developed a particular interest in the relationship between political and religious ideologies and cultural heritage conservation.*

Arpitha Shreedhara *is a master's student at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and currently in her second semester of the course. Arpitha is from India and an architect by profession. As a conservation student and architect, she has trained to perform in different fields, such as construction management, interior design, heritage site management, heritage fundraising and financing, field surveying, conservation of ruins, and archaeology. Arpitha has a special interest in studying what validates heritage today. Her take on the political situation tarnishing heritage in modern India reflects this interest.*

Estibaliz Sienra Iracheta *has a bachelor's degree in Textile Design from the Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico City) and specialises in the research, conservation, and promotion of traditional textiles. She worked for the Ruth D. Lechuga Folk Art Collection of the Franz Mayer Museum, managing a collection of 3,500 textiles and organising ethnographic exhibitions. She has also taught as a memeber of the Textile Conservation Department of the National School of Conservation, Restoration and Museography (ENCRYM), where she taught traditional textile production techniques for the restoration of historic and ethnographic textiles. In 2016 she was awarded a Scholarship for highly qualified professionals by the National Fund for Culture and Arts (FONCA) and the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico in order to pursue the Master in World Heritage Studies in BTU-Cottbus. Her participation in the project arose from her particular interest in the theories of culture and cultural heritage, and their intrinsic relations with power structures and political ideologies.*

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